

CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING

*Essays on the
Common-sense Background
of Philosophy*

BY

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वन्दे नित्यं प्रशान्तं सुचरित-निरतं नाकभाजं वरेण्यम् ।
वन्द्योपाध्याय-वंश्यं हरिचरणमहं वत्सलं तातपादम् ॥

देवीं सौरभिणीं नमामि जननीं स्वीयैः सदा सद्गुणैः ।
या प्रावाह्यदक्षरां सुरभितां सौजन्य-मन्दाकिनीम् ॥

गेहे दक्षां विमल-चरितां घाम्मिकीं धम्म-पत्नीम् ।
यातां स्वर्गं सुकृत-विजितं जाह्नवीं तां स्मरामि ॥

जनकाय जनन्यै च जायायै च तथात्मनः ।
अयं समर्प्यते ग्रन्थः श्रद्धया सादरं मया ॥

निकुञ्ज-विहारि वन्द्योपाध्यायेन ॥

PREFACE

THIS volume is intended to be a discussion of what, perhaps, are the chief problems of philosophy with due regard for the standpoint of the layman and with a view to separating philosophic thought from the effects of sophistication and intellectual pride to which philosophical enquiry is usually prone. This has been indicated by my description of the book as essays on the common-sense background of philosophy. In any case, I have felt that I have attempted more than what lay within my capacity to accomplish, with the result that I have had to leave many things undone, and what has been done appears to me to be incomplete and inadequate. I have, also, not always been able to bring sufficient weight of fact and reason to bear upon my conclusions. But I would in this regard tell the reader that abstract generalizations do not have much of a charm for me, nor does it give me any special pleasure to cultivate a dogmatic attitude. At the same time it is incumbent upon me to apprise him of my inability to see why of all enquiries philosophy should specially be deprived of the privilege of making room within its fold for convictions not opposed to fact or reason, but free from the need of the support of either, being but deliverances of sheer common sense. If to offer opinions and ideas born of such convictions is to ignore facts or to be dogmatic, I certainly have made no attempt to escape either of the faults.

The division of the book into parts and of the parts into sections is not strictly logical. Nor are the sections within the parts and the parts themselves governed by any rigid architectonic principle. But the work as a whole is expected to reveal the development of a certain line of thought. The first two parts contain between them most of my thoughts on the problem of knowledge. My discussion of this problem is indeed polemical. But even then I have kept my proper place as a learner rather than a mere critic. And I have learnt more from Kant than from any other Western philosopher. My special endeavour, however, has been not so much to attempt a solution of the problem of knowledge as to find the problem itself. This I considered urgent in view of the perplexed state of epistemology. If I have failed there, I shall be content

to have my work regarded as negative—negative in so far as it is an attempt to show that the problem of knowledge as handed down by tradition is imaginary and the solutions offered to it are but ways of escape from the real crux of the epistemological situation. Against this background is set one of my major conclusions, which consists in stating that for our knowledge of the external world we are solely dependent upon enlightened common sense, common sense as deepened and refined by science, and that the age-old claim of philosophy to contribute to it is nugatory. This is only recognizing the supremacy of science in a field where it is to all intents and purposes unrivalled—subject, of course, to certain conditions for which I would refer the reader to the body of the book. But in no sense does this amount to extolling science at the cost of philosophy including metaphysics, as has from time to time been done by philosophers blinded by the dazzling light of science. If civilization is not already doomed, we owe to philosophy a debt which is not to be paid by means of its liquidation. Yet at the same time we can ill afford to deny the importance of science. Hence the all-important question: 'What, then, is philosophy?' which has been handled rather desultorily in the third part of the book.

To determine the scope of philosophy or to ascertain the various philosophical disciplines is no easy task. And to try to accomplish it within a restricted compass, as I have undertaken to do, is perhaps to court failure. But since in the case of a philosophical adventure success is never guaranteed, I would ask the reader not hastily to ignore the result of my endeavour and, in particular, my hesitant attempt to treat of the baffling problem: Is metaphysics possible? Some suggestions from Kant and the wisdom embedded in early Indian philosophic thought have indeed been my guides in this attempt. But I alone am responsible for excluding from metaphysics all that is non-human and regarding the self as the centre as well as the circumference of the field of this philosophical discipline. The enemies of metaphysics are not men but dogmas. Unconquered egotism showing the road to idealism and, worse still, to spiritualistic absolutism; sheer want of the sense of human dignity resulting in materialism; empiricism, old and new, with its constricted and misleading theory of verification; psychology as it has been through the ages—these are some of the embodiments of dogma that have spelt disaster to metaphysics. But the future of metaphysics is left unscathed, and, so far as I can see, it needs to be built

upon the foundation of the feeling of obligation, the most human of the forces that deserve to govern the world of human affairs and to shape the destiny of man. Yet the metaphysician, while treading on the path thus indicated, is not above the need of caution against pitfalls.

Out of place in a metaphysical pursuit is the mistaken enthusiasm which forces the feeling of obligation to yield such egoistic negatives as freedom and immortality instead of allowing it to point to the essentiality of selves to one another, apart from which it seems to be meaningless and without which human beings would be but insular units with no tie to bind them together. Not to speak of the State, even the Deity with His infinite power and love cannot be credited with the capacity for establishing this mutuality, if the selves, considered as such, be impervious to it. Yet it cannot be ignored, though it is not easy to realize, that man, born biologically as he unavoidably is, is heir to an original ignorance—and ignorance is no sin—which consigns him to a state of bondage by concealing from him his essentiality to others of his kind. Hence the fundamental problem of life more commonly recognized in the East than in the West—the problem of liberation or rebirth in the manner of spiritual regeneration, which is distinct from the problem of good and evil, right and wrong customarily called ethical as well as from the problem of divine realization traditionally designated as religious.

This problem has been discussed briefly towards the end of the third part of the book and in a somewhat detailed manner in its fourth and last part. The solution, as I have argued there, is to be found in the religion of man as revealed in the light of the wisdom of Buddha and most prominently symbolized by the life of Jesus. Recognizing the ultimate value and significance of human existence as it does, religion thus conceived is foundational and indeed is the touchstone of any religion that be. Viewed in this perspective, the old religion, the religion of God, acquires a new meaning as an individual concern, both private and sacred and yet attuned to the spirit of the religion of man. These are some of the opinions I have made bold to offer in the hope that the poverty of the inspiration from which they spring will not deprive them of the importance which is their due.

This volume has no new idea or theory to offer, and to originality it makes no claim except in the sense that its object is to suggest the need of a fresh enquiry into some of the problems of philosophy and to

stimulate doubt about some of the old beliefs which still hold sway in philosophical circles. It may be that I am indebted to philosophical thought, both Indian and Western, even in respect of the suggestions which I may claim as my own.

The idea of a 'system' is foreign to this book. It is not a systematic treatise either. Two-thirds of it were written more than twenty years ago during intervals between University Terms, while its concluding part was begun and completed in 1955. But the whole manuscript has been revised and, in part, rewritten. Had this not been done, the book would have remained, perhaps, a bundle of fragments which, in its present form, I hope it is not. Nevertheless, repetitions of ideas, arguments and even language fill some of its pages—repetitions which, prejudicial to the worth, especially of a philosophical work, I found myself unable to avoid. My handicap due to my use of a language which is not my own is partly responsible for this defect as well for some others which the reader may be able to detect.

I would be failing in my duty if I did not acknowledge my debt to my colleagues for their encouragement which has sustained me throughout my work. I am specially grateful to Mr. Sushil Kumar Saxena, a younger colleague of mine, who has rendered valuable help in the final preparation of the manuscript.

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Part One

PROLEGOMENA TO
A THEORY
OF KNOWLEDGE

TOWARDS A THEORY OF SENSE-PERCEPTION

PROBLEMS in general, and philosophical problems in particular, arise out of reflection upon common sense necessitated by such actual facts of experience as cannot easily be neglected. In order to ascertain what the real problem of sense-perception is, it is, therefore, necessary to consider the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge and also to take note of the empirical facts which lead to reflection upon that view.

The Common-sense View of Perceptual Knowledge

In fact, there is no such thing as a well-defined and clearly formulated opinion on any matter which could be called the common-sense view about it. But if it be enquired of a plain man how he views a certain matter, the common-sense view about that matter may gradually be elicited through his replies to the enquiry. As regards perceptual knowledge, if a plain man who is, for example, seeing a table before him be asked to give his own understanding of the situation in which he is placed at the moment, he is likely to reply that he knows a thing called a table standing at a distance from him. This obviously means that his seeing the table involves a sort of relation which links, as it were, the distant table with himself. If he is made to go deeper into the matter, he may further realize that even if he remains exactly where he is, and the table also continues to remain in the same state in which it is, when he sees it, the phenomenon, viz., his perceptual knowledge of the table, will not occur in case the relation which is essential to this phenomenon be prevented from taking place by means of such devices as the closure of his eyes.

Indeed, the relation involved in perceptual knowledge is dependent upon a variety of conditions, some of which are positive while others

are negative. The opening of the eyelids and the direction of the eyes towards the table are some of the positive conditions, while the absence of a screen or of dense fog between the eyes and the table may be a negative condition in the given instance of perceptual knowledge. Now, if these conditions are realized at one time and not at another alternately, and if the relation involved in the seeing of the table be thereby allowed to take place and not to take place alternately, and further, if this process of alternation be repeated a number of times, then the plain man will be forced to realize an important truth, which is as follows. Whenever the relation in question occurs, the percipient goes out of himself, as it were, and grasps the table at the place where it is, and the table, in its turn, reveals itself to him. When, on the contrary, the relation does not occur, the passage of the percipient to the table out there is checked, and the table is prevented from revealing itself. The plain man will thus come to realize that perceptual knowledge primarily consists in the transcendence of the subject to the object and the self-revelation of the object to the subject. This peculiar relation between the subject and the object may simply be expressed by the current epistemological term 'compresence'.

*The Essential Implications of the Common-sense
View of Perceptual Knowledge*

The transcendence on the part of the subject obviously implies the reality of the subject. But in order that this 'transcendence' may not be a mere word, but have a real meaning, as it should, the object to which the subject is to transcend should be something other than the subject itself, that is, an independent reality. Perceptual knowledge, according to common sense, thus implies the independent reality of the object perceived.

Another implication of perceptual knowledge as viewed by common sense relates to the revelation of the object to the subject. If the appointed rôle of perceptual knowledge be not to disguise or to distort its object, but, as common sense holds, to disclose the identity of the object, the object as perceived must be held to be identical with the object in itself. This means that perceptual knowledge is direct and immediate, that nothing intervenes between the subject to which the object is presented and the object presented.

That perceptual knowledge is direct and immediate and that its

object is an independent reality are, however, open to dispute and have, as a matter of fact, often been disputed by philosophers. But, as we shall see later, the considerations, on which the dispute is based, are due to misunderstanding and are really misleading. It will also be clear from what follows that a satisfactory theory of sense-perception, far from disputing the validity of these implications, should admit them as ultimate data.

*The Limitation of the Common-sense View of
Perceptual Knowledge*

The common-sense view of perceptual knowledge is, however, subject to a limitation consisting in its avoidance of certain questions. But it is to be admitted that it really strengthens its position by avoiding those questions that have no relevancy to the fact of perceptual knowledge as such. Its real defect may be said to lie in its neglect of certain other questions, if there be any, which bear upon perceptual knowledge and, therefore, have a legitimate claim to consideration in a theory of sense-perception.

(a) Questions irrelevant to the Fact of Perceptual Knowledge

These questions come under two distinct heads: (1) those which demand an explanation of the fact of perceptual knowledge itself; (2) those which are obviously of a metaphysical character. 'How is perceptual knowledge possible?'; 'How does the mind know the external world?' are the usual forms in which questions of the former kind are asked. Some philosophers are of opinion that questions of this kind are prior to those of metaphysics, and that the latter cannot be answered satisfactorily except in the light of the answers to the former. But it can be shown that the demand for the explanation of the fact of perceptual knowledge generally owes its origin to one metaphysical doctrine or another which is opposed to the very possibility of this kind of knowledge or at least renders its possibility extremely difficult.

It is, however, worth while to discuss whether the demand for the explanation of the fact of perceptual knowledge is legitimate. The explanation, if possible at all, should be of either of two forms: scientific or empirical, and logical or transcendental. The former may again be physico-physiological or psychological according as it refers to the physical and physiological conditions of sense-perception or to any

psychological law or laws that may be supposed to underlie the occurrence of perceptual knowledge. It may also be both physico-physiological and psychological, as it has sometimes been in the hands of both philosophers and psychologists. But whichever may be the specific character of the scientific explanation of perceptual knowledge, it is, as all scientific explanations must be, of a mechanical nature, consisting in tracing perceptual knowledge to the determining factors which are chronologically prior to it. That being so, it only gives an account of the origin of perceptual knowledge, but can provide no information about what perceptual knowledge is. The purely psychological explanation of perceptual knowledge is, however, open to a special difficulty owing to the fact that the psychological laws, if there be any, operating in connection with the occurrence of perceptual knowledge, are less obvious and more difficult to discover than the physical and physiological conditions of sense-perception. This is perhaps the reason why the associationists' psychological explanation of perceptual knowledge was not successful.

The logical or transcendental explanation of perceptual knowledge is based on the understanding that our knowledge of things, though a natural event, is unique in that it is itself *judgment*, whereas other natural events may only be *judged about*. In dealing with perceptual knowledge, it may therefore be held, we are required to deal with perceptual judgment. Accordingly, the explanation of perceptual knowledge may be said to consist not in accounting for its origin but in analysing perceptual judgment into its essential factors. Such analysis of perceptual judgment, the foremost example of which is to be found in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, is obviously distinct from the usual scientific explanation of perceptual knowledge. But even the logical analysis of perceptual judgment, however useful or necessary it may be, throws no new light on the essential nature of perceptual knowledge. As previously seen, perceptual knowledge ultimately involves two elements: the transcendence of the subject to the object, and the direct and immediate revelation of the object to the subject. They are obviously such that they do not come within the purview of, but must be presupposed by, the logical analysis of perceptual judgment. Strictly speaking, perceptual knowledge is not only non-mechanical but non-logical, which means that the fact of perceptual knowledge involving the two elements is ultimate and inexplicable. This, however, is a truth

which is fully embodied in the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge, as is evident from the fact that common sense neither raises, nor does make an attempt to answer, the question regarding the possibility of our knowledge of the external world. Hence the advantage which the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge has over most of the current epistemological theories which primarily aim at the solution of this question.

The questions coming under the second of the two heads distinguished above relate to the ultimate nature of the knowing mind and physical things known and the relation between the two. They are, of course, legitimate, and may be of fundamental importance in metaphysics. But they are irrelevant to the enquiry into the nature of perceptual knowledge and of no consequence to a theory of sense-perception; because, no matter how they are answered, the fact of perceptual knowledge would remain unaffected. Strictly speaking, the fact of perceptual knowledge should be taken to be a basis of the metaphysical construction of the nature of mind and physical things and their mutual relation. And any attempt to deduce a view of the nature of perceptual knowledge from an a priori theory of mind and the physical world and of the relation between the two would obviously be arbitrary and unwarranted. That being so, common sense is above reproach in so far as it conforms to a fundamental demand of the theory of sense-perception by keeping itself free of the questions under consideration, and thereby avoids the risk of being vitiated by dogmatism.

(b) *Questions relevant to the Fact of Perceptual Knowledge but neglected by Common Sense*

Here we have to start with the consideration of two kinds of fact: (1) perception affected by relativity such as an individual's apprehension of one and the same thing as 'round' under one set of circumstances and as 'oval' under another; (2) illusion, dream and hallucination. Our perceptual experience under both these heads may be said to be objectively determined, owing its origin to the influence of some extra-mental or independently existing cause or causes. From the point of view of origin, both these kinds of our perceptual experience may, therefore, be said to stand more or less on the same footing as our veridical perception, which is undoubtedly due to the stimulus delivered by an independently existing thing or things. But, from the point of

view of cognitive value, there seems to be a fundamental difference between veridical perception and the two kinds of perceptual experience under discussion. In the case of the former, the object as perceived is presumably identical with the object in itself, whereas in the case of the latter that is not so. Perception affected by relativity may, however, be regarded as falling in a class apart from illusion, dream and hallucination in view of the fact that in the case of the former the object as perceived, though not exactly identical with the object in itself, may yet be said somehow to represent it, whereas in the case of the latter, either there is no object in itself or such object, if there be any, is as distinct from the object as perceived as two numerically or qualitatively different things are from each other. From this point of view, perception affected by relativity may be said to belong to the side of veridical perception rather than to that of illusion, dream and hallucination. But, then, veridical perception, on its strict interpretation as that kind of perceptual experience in whose case the object as perceived is identical with the object in itself, is to be regarded as falling in a class apart from not only illusion, dream and hallucination but also perception affected by relativity. That being so, the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge would apply only to veridical perception, leaving unanswered the questions that are bound to arise in connection with perception affected by relativity as well as illusion, dream and hallucination.

The difficulty of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge would, however, turn out to be much greater if it were a fact that all our perceptual experiences, including even those that are called veridical, are affected by relativity. For, in that event, even in the case of veridical perception the object as perceived would be different from, not identical with, the object in itself, so that the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge would altogether lose its applicability, the so-called veridical perception being excluded from its scope.

So the consideration of perceptual experience affected by relativity and illusion, dream and hallucination may be said to bear upon the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge in either of two ways: (i) by limiting its scope to veridical perception alone; (ii) by rendering it inapplicable to our perceptual experience in any shape or form. Now, as regards the latter alternative, it needs to be observed that its admission would prove most unfavourable to the proper understanding of

the nature of perceptual knowledge. For one cannot admit it without at the same time holding the view that there is no qualitative distinction between veridical perception and the kinds of perceptual experience under discussion, or at least that such distinction, if there be any between the two, does not relate to their objective meaning. And this view in either form obviously implies the absurd position that error is not a mere accidental phenomenon in the field of our perceptual experience, but is essential to, or inseparable from, it. It is, however, of interest to note that this position is an inevitable consequence of the causal conception of perceptual experience. If it be held that perceptual experience is ultimately the effect mechanically produced by certain physical and physiological causes, there would be no escape from the admission of the distinction between the object as perceived and the object in itself in all cases of our perceptual experience. But to find nothing but error in all perceptual experience speaks of an attitude which is too odd to deserve commendation. So it would be arbitrary and unwarrantable to deny the possibility of veridical perception in the sense in which common sense understands it, and thereby to argue the absolute inapplicability of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge.

In the light of the above conclusion we are now in a position to ascertain how our perceptual experiences affected by relativity should be dealt with in a theory of sense-perception. Of course, these experiences present the greatest difficulty in the way of the construction of a satisfactory theory of sense-perception owing to their perplexing character. As seen above, they, in a sense, come over to the side of veridical perception; but in a sense they also belong to the side of illusion, dream and hallucination. This uncertainty of their position, however, needs to be resolved in order that a satisfactory theory of sense-perception may be constructed. On this point we have only to make the following observation. Unless one chooses to commit oneself to the absurd view of perceptual experience as essentially erroneous by obliterating the qualitative distinction between veridical perception and perceptual experience affected by relativity and treating both as of the same kind, one should regard the latter as belonging to the same kind of perceptual experience as illusion, dream and hallucination and, so, as qualitatively distinct from veridical perception.

But there is no denying the fact that our erroneous perceptual ex-

perience in general falls outside of the scope of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge. Indeed, this view takes no cognisance of the fact that our perceptual experience may at times be erroneous. But, then, it is necessary to ascertain the exact way in which it is affected by the consideration of erroneous perceptual experience. In this regard philosophers generally believe that one cannot take cognisance of this kind of perceptual experience without at the same time rejecting the validity of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge. But in entertaining this belief they obviously ignore a question of fundamental importance, viz., how can we at all know that there is such a thing as erroneous perceptual experience? Now, in dealing with this question one cannot help admitting that only those perceptual experiences are erroneous in whose case the object as perceived is purely private to the percipient, and different from, not identical with, the independently existing thing, if there be any. But this fact about erroneous perceptual experience cannot obviously be ascertained except in the light of some other perceptual experience in which the independently existing thing in question presents itself in its identity, or, in other words, in whose case the thing as perceived is identical with the thing in itself. Hence it is evident that one cannot even speak of any such thing as erroneous perceptual experience without at the same time admitting the validity of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge, the view which emphasizes the fact that we are capable of perceiving, and do, as a matter of fact, perceive, independently existing physical things directly and immediately. How, then, can the fact of erroneous perceptual experience be taken to be contradictory to the validity of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge?

The fact that the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge leaves out of account perceptual experience affected by relativity, and illusion, dream and hallucination is, however, no reason why these things should not be taken into consideration in a theory of sense-perception. On the contrary, the problem which a theory of sense-perception has specially to deal with, as we shall see below, relates precisely to these things. But there is no gainsaying the fact that common sense and common sense alone can give us information about the true nature of perceptual knowledge. It is only not aware of the problem that arises in connection with perceptual experience, nor does its view of perceptual knowledge include any solution of that problem.

This means that common sense provides no *theory* of sense-perception. But no theory of sense-perception can be constructed merely on the basis of the first view of perceptual experience which, as previously observed, the thinker elicits from the plain man by means of questionings. The blame for the shortcoming from which the common-sense understanding of the perceptual situation suffers should, therefore, be attributed not to common sense but to the thinker for his not going far enough to complete his task. However that may be, the remedy for the shortcoming is to be found not in the replacement of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge by an epistemological theory opposed to it, but in its development in terms of the solution of the problem of which it is unconscious.

The Real Problem of Sense-perception

The nature and conditions of reflection upon the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge have already been brought to light. The results of such reflection are also at our disposal. It is with reference to these results that we are now required to find out whether any genuine problem arises in connection with perceptual experience, and, if so, what exactly the nature of that problem is. Now, a problem may be supposed to arise with regard to the possibility of perceptual knowledge or with regard to the nature of the perceiving mind and things perceived. In the former case, the problem would demand either an enquiry into the origin of perceptual experience or a logical analysis of perceptual judgment. But however may the problem in either form be solved, the solution, as we have already seen, is bound to leave the essential nature of perceptual knowledge absolutely unaffected. What is thus true about the problem of the possibility of perceptual knowledge is equally true about the problem of the ultimate nature of the perceiving mind and things perceived. Hence is revealed the plain truth that no genuine problem can arise in connection with perceptual knowledge as such, which, however, means that the fact of perceptual knowledge should be accepted as an ultimate datum in an epistemological enquiry.

But there is no denying the fact that all cases of our perceptual experience do not yield knowledge. There are cases in which we only seem to know, but do not really know. These are obviously cases of exception to perceptual knowledge. Had no such exceptions occurred,

no epistemological problem would have arisen in connection with our perceptual experience; because in that event all cases of our perceptual *experience* would have been cases of perceptual *knowledge* which, as mentioned above, only needs to be admitted as an ultimate datum in an epistemological enquiry. But the situation is altered by the fact that our perceptual experience sometimes fails to yield knowledge. In consequence, there arises a problem which, obviously, is no other than that of the distinction between the cases of our perceptual experience which do not yield knowledge and those which do. In other words, our perceptual experience gives rise to a problem only when it is an aberration of perceptual knowledge and takes the form of perception affected by relativity, illusion, dream or hallucination. It should, however, be borne in mind that this problem itself as well as the solution it may possibly receive presupposes the admission of the possibility of perceptual knowledge or veridical perception in the sense in which common sense understands it, viz., as direct and immediate apprehension of the thing in itself. It would, therefore, be suicidal to turn back to perceptual knowledge from the various kinds of exception to it and to cause a problem to break out within its very heart with a view to solving the same.

The Fallacy of Current Theories of Sense-perception

As previously observed, the main theses of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge are: (i) that the thing perceived is an independent existence; (ii) that perceptual knowledge is direct and immediate. Now, it may be contended that the second thesis, though not the first, is contradicted by the facts of perception affected by relativity. When, for example, I perceive a thing as *red* under one set of circumstances, and as *grey* under another, I am led to doubt that the thing as perceived by me in either case is identical with the thing in itself, the thing that exists independently of me. No occasion, however, arises just then for my doubting the validity of the first thesis, according to which my perception points to an independently existing thing. But when I pass on from the consideration of cases of perception affected by relativity to those of illusion, dream and hallucination, what happens is that not only does my earlier doubt about the validity of the second thesis become stronger, but I am led to question the validity of the first thesis.

Further, my doubt about the independent existence of the thing perceived may gather fresh strength when I consider some of my experiences belonging to fields other than the cognitive, say, feeling, etc., which cannot be spoken of as erroneous, and yet are such that they, even if externally determined, point to myself or a state of my mind rather than to anything existing independently of me.

The procedure such as the one outlined above seems to have been adopted either as a whole or in part by most of the current epistemological theories in their treatment of the 'perplexity' which is said to be caused to common sense by the consideration of the facts of illusion, etc.¹ Now, there is no gainsaying the fact that common sense is too firmly tied down to perceptual knowledge or veridical perception to look beyond it, and is unprepared to envisage the phenomena of illusion, etc., with the result that when they are brought to its notice it is naturally perplexed. But the question to be decided here is whether the way out of this perplexity of common sense is to be found in the aforementioned procedure resulting in the rejection of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge. The answer, from our point of view, is in the negative for two reasons. One of them is that the view of illusion, etc., as homogeneous with perceptual knowledge—which is the inevitable result of this procedure—reduces perceptual knowledge to bare awareness of sense-data, while the truth seems to be that no awareness on our part can be perceptual knowledge proper if it does not have an independently existing thing as its object—a truth on which common sense insists with the greatest firmness. That there may be such things as illusion, dream and hallucination is, of course, undeniable. But they are only different forms of erroneous perception, which are exceptions to perceptual knowledge. That being so, they should on no account be held to be of the same kind as perceptual knowledge, lest the distinction between truth and error that there may be in the field of perceptual experience should be left altogether unrecognized. This brings us to the second reason which, as previously stated, is that we cannot know that we perceive things wrongly except in so far as we are able to recognize the erroneous character of our false preceptions, if and when they occur; and that such recognition is possible only in the light of, and in contrast with, perceptual knowledge regarded as the direct and immediate revelation of independently existing things.

¹ Cf. Holt and others, *New Realism*, pp. 2-3.

The conclusion following from the above considerations is, briefly, this. The general belief underlying most of the current epistemological theories, viz., that the facts of illusion, etc., are contradictory to the validity of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge, should yield place to the deeper conviction that in a world such as ours, where errors of perception occur not without the possibility of our recognition of their erroneous character, the validity of the main theses of the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge remains uncontradicted.

The Nature of a Theory of Sense-perception

This essay may be concluded with a few observations on the nature of the theory of sense-perception. The position we have so far reached may first be stated briefly as follows. The problem of the possibility of perceptual knowledge is not genuine; because it is more often than not determined by some sort of a priori metaphysical theory of mind and the physical world. Besides, neither the scientific explanation of the origin of sense-perception nor the logical analysis of perceptual judgment, for which this problem may be said to put forward a demand, can affect the essential nature of perceptual knowledge. The problem of the nature of the perceiving mind and things perceived is, however, genuine. But it is metaphysical and has hardly anything to do with the nature of perceptual knowledge. In fact, no manner of the solution of this problem can throw more light on the nature of perceptual knowledge than either the genetic explanation of sense-perception or the logical analysis of perceptual judgment may be able to do.

In view of the above considerations, a theory of sense-perception should start with the acceptance of perceptual knowledge as an ultimate datum instead of straying into the scientific or logical or metaphysical explanation of its possibility. Hence the importance of common sense in the ascertainment of the peculiar problem with which a theory of sense-perception is concerned. The reason why common sense does not immediately yield a theory of sense-perception is, however, not that its view of perceptual knowledge is wrong, but that it does not take into account the fact that there may be cases of perceptual experience like illusion, etc., which are really exceptions to perceptual knowledge—exactly the fact that gives rise to the problem with which a theory of sense-perception has specially to deal. Strictly speaking, it is not perceptual knowledge itself, but exceptions to, or negations of,

it that come in for consideration in the special province of the theory of sense-perception. But since this is a truth which has often been neglected with the result that epistemology still remains in an unsatisfactory and unsettled state, it is necessary to show that most of the current epistemological theories deal with a pseudo-problem, viz., the problem of the possibility of perceptual knowledge, while missing the problem that needs to be solved.

But we are still not quite out of the wood. For the question remains as to how a theory of sense-perception should treat of the phenomena of illusion, etc. One thing, however, is certain, viz., that these phenomena, on account of their being exceptions to perceptual knowledge, should be understood in contrast with the latter. And this means that the problem which a theory of sense-perception is specially required to solve relates to the distinction between perceptual knowledge and what only seems to be, and really is not, such knowledge. But the problem of this distinction, it may be said, admits of treatment in more ways than one. In particular, the question of origin or metaphysical background, from which we have been trying to extricate the theory of sense-perception, may be brought to bear upon the understanding of the distinction between perceptual knowledge and erroneous perceptual experience. In consequence, the business of a theory of sense-perception may be held to be the discovery of the difference between the respective psycho-physical conditions, or the respective metaphysical status of the objects, of perceptual knowledge and erroneous experience. But there is yet a third possible way of dealing with the same distinction which makes no reference to any extrinsic aspect of perceptual knowledge and erroneous perception, whether relating to their psycho-physical conditions or the metaphysical status of their objects, but is concerned with the criterion of the distinction between true and false perceptual judgments, and thus takes into account the only intrinsic difference that there may be between perceptual knowledge and erroneous perception.

Of these three ways of dealing with the distinction between perceptual knowledge and erroneous perception which may respectively be called scientific, metaphysical and logical, the last, but neither of the former two—for reasons to be explained in our next essay on 'The Problem and Postulates of Epistemology'—constitutes the theory of sense-perception.

II

THE PROBLEM AND POSTULATES OF A THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

An Analysis of Knowledge

THE primary concern of a theory is the solution of a problem or problems that are genuine. And a problem is genuine if the matter to which it relates demands an explanation and is really explicable. In constructing a theory of knowledge we are, therefore, required to ascertain whether there is anything about knowledge which really stands in need of explanation and is also capable of being explained. This would obviously demand an understanding of the nature of knowledge as a preliminary step. In regard to this demand, the following observations may suffice for our immediate purpose.

The kind of knowledge which we may suitably consider here is that which we have in our normal adult life. It is difficult for us to determine with any measure of certainty what the nature of knowledge is in persons in an unconscious or semi-conscious state or in infants, idiots or the subhuman species of animals. It is also not necessary for us to enquire whether any knowledge higher than, or different in nature from, our ordinary knowledge is possible.

Any instance of our ordinary knowledge is analysable into two elements: (i) the relation between the subject and the object or, briefly, the cognitive relation; (ii) a judgment of fact which may appropriately be called a cognitive judgment. About the relation between the two, it would perhaps not be improper to say that hardly any instance of knowledge is ordinarily available in whose case there is cognitive relation, that is, the subject is aware of an object and yet there is no cognitive judgment, that is, the subject does not affirm or deny something of the object. This holds good at least in the case of our knowledge in our normal adult life, though we cannot definitely ascertain

whether it is equally true of other kinds of knowledge that there may be. The possibility of cognitive relation apart from cognitive judgment does not, however, seem to be logically absurd. But a cognitive judgment apart from a cognitive relation is evidently an impossibility.

Now, the cognitive relation, in order that it may be a relation in the true sense of the term, demands two things: the independent reality of that which is subject or knower and of the thing known; and the directness and immediacy of the presentation of the object to the subject. Both these things seem to be immediate deliverances of our experience. But while philosophers generally speak of the cognitive relation, they often dispute the validity of these demands of the cognitive relation, though, as we shall see hereafter, the dispute is really without foundation.

As regards the cognitive judgment, it is peculiar in that, no matter whether it *is* true or false, it bears a *claim* to truth which is usually of significance in practical life. This is quite evident from the fact that an instance of cognitive judgment demanding a certain action may immediately prompt the person, whose judgment it is, to act in an appropriate manner, and that his action, if it takes place, does so irrespective of whether the cognitive judgment in question *is* true or false. Nevertheless, there is no denying the fact that the cognitive judgment immediately involved in an instance of knowledge, despite its inherent claim to truth, is liable to be contradicted and so is not necessarily true. I, for example, may at one time judge a thing lying before me as a snake and thereupon may run away from it, but I myself or someone else may subsequently find out that the thing is really a piece of rope. The original truth-claim of a cognitive judgment being thus no guarantee of its being true, the question naturally arises as to how we are to ascertain whether it *is* true or false.

Ultimate Data in a Theory of Knowledge

The question with which the foregoing section ends indicates the nature of the central problem in a theory of knowledge, to which we shall return later. Just at present it would do merely to have a review of the facts about knowledge which do not give rise to any problem but should be regarded as ultimate data in a theory of knowledge. One of the facts of this kind is the cognitive relation which, as previously seen, is an essential element in our knowledge. Indeed, the recognition

of the cognitive relation as an ultimate datum is necessary for realizing the truth that knowledge is essentially a relational phenomenon, not an entity or a quality. The necessity of emphasizing this truth in a theory of knowledge is, however, most urgent in view of the fact that it has been ignored very often and in more than one way in the history of philosophy.

Some philosophers admit the primacy of the subject or the knowing mind and reduce the object to a mode or state of the mind. This expresses the subjective attitude which is common to all forms of subjective idealism and betrays predilection for psychology, the science which deals with mind. There are also philosophers who, on the other hand, lay undue emphasis on the rôle of the object in knowledge and regard the knowing mind as subordinate to the object in some sense or other. This points to the objective attitude which draws inspiration from the physical sciences, and is to be met with in materialistic metaphysics and certain schools of realism. But more arbitrary than either of these two attitudes is the one which, in complete neglect of the verdict of common sense and in the name of attaining the highest truth about the nature of knowledge, exorcises the ultimate character of both the subject and the object. And by upholding the standpoint of the Absolute it views knowledge as a way of the unfolding, or else a means of the falsification, of the true nature of the Absolute. According to the absolutists like Hegel, while the infinite variety of facts expresses in infinitely varying degrees the nature of the Absolute, the fact of knowledge, owing to its involving the subject-object relation, is peculiarly fitted to reveal the inner essence of the Absolute. Other absolutists such as Samkara,¹ on the other hand, hold that all phenomena including knowledge, far from being able to express the nature of the Absolute, are bound to present a distorted view of it, owing to their own imperfect nature.

All the three attitudes are, however, the outcome of the none too rare desire on the part of philosophers to emphasize the all-importance of metaphysics of a kind by holding that facts are to be interpreted with reference to an a priori conception of ultimate reality rather than that the nature of ultimate reality is to be understood with reference to facts. But epistemology should avoid the influence of this view in order that it may recognize the truly relational character of knowledge. To

¹ The foremost Advaita-Vedantist in India.

this end it is absolutely necessary for it to assume a new attitude towards knowledge, the strictly subjective-objective attitude, which would enable it to regard both the subject and the object as ultimate and thereby prevent it from espousing the cause of physical science or psychology or metaphysics as well as from being unduly apathetic to any of these branches of knowledge.

Our next task is to ascertain whether the independent existence of the thing known, and the directness and immediacy of the presentation of the object to the subject are open to dispute or should be regarded as unquestionable ultimate data. Before proceeding to this task, we may first try to explain why the independent existence of the object rather than that of the subject should be of immediate concern to us, while the fact is that knowledge involves the subject and the object equally necessarily. The explanation may best be given with reference to the results of the discussion on this subject contained in our essay on 'Whither Consciousness?'.

The independent existence of that which figures as object in the cognitive relation is testified to by the fact of its *given-ness*, which is an immediate deliverance of our experience. But what is more important than this is that the object in being given is given to a subject, which obviously makes for the *affirmation* of the independent existence of the object. Even granted that the object exists independently, its independent existence would be nothing to us except in so far as it comes to be affirmed. And the affirmation is solely dependent on the testimony of the subject to which the object is given. The situation which thus obtains in the case of the object has no parallel in the case of the subject. The fact of knowledge only points to the logical subject or the bare knower. It provides no ground on which we could affirm the independent existence of that which is subject. Or, in other words, it has no immediate means of showing that that which is subject in the cognitive relation exists independently as 'self'. If it is held that the object which is presented to the subject serves to affirm the latter's independent existence, it would only be indulging in an absurd way of thinking. To speak of the subject as affirming its own independent existence would be equally absurd; because it would presuppose the ascription to the self of the impossible rôle of both a subject and an object at once. So it follows that the question of the independent existence of that which is subject cannot immediately concern us.

Let us return to the task which we proposed earlier to undertake. So far as the verdict of common sense goes, the independent existence of the thing known is indisputable and is to be accepted as an ultimate datum. But it may be contended that common sense cannot have the final say in all matters, especially those which demand critical enquiry as matters philosophical undoubtedly do. That being so, the common-sense view of the existential status of the object of knowledge need not necessarily be accepted as final. But even then, it is to be conceded to common sense that its view on any matter should be allowed to remain unchallenged unless there is sufficient reason for disputing its validity. Now, such reason, if there be any in the present context, should be advanced by those theories of knowledge which deny the independent existence of the object of knowledge. In particular, idealism should be in a position to provide the reason in question, or should at least shoulder the *onus probandi* of its negative thesis that the object of knowledge does not exist independently. This raises the most important point at issue between idealism and realism which we shall have occasion to discuss in our essays on 'Sense-data, Perception and Self-knowledge' and 'Our Knowledge of the External World'. Meanwhile it may suffice to point out that idealism has never established its negative thesis, but has admitted it as a corollary of its positive thesis that the object of knowledge is mental, which, in its turn, is a necessary implication of its unproved general assumption that nothing is real which is not itself a mind or does not belong to it in some sense or other. But since it would be nothing short of a travesty of philosophic thought to sacrifice an immediate deliverance of our experience to the demand of a purely a priori metaphysical theory, there is sufficient justification for retaining the common-sense view of the existential status of the object of knowledge, despite the idealist's opposition to it.

As regards the directness and immediacy of our knowledge, which common sense regards as another ultimate datum, it may also be pointed out that any dispute about it must have sufficient reason to stand upon. Such reason, if there be any, should, it is natural to expect, be put forward by those theories which deny that things in themselves can be known directly and immediately. Now, the chief forms of the theory which take this step are phenomenism and representationism. The former holds that the thing in itself not only cannot present itself directly and immediately to the knower, but is absolutely unknown

and unknowable. The latter advocates the less extreme view that the thing in itself does not admit of direct and immediate presentation to the knower, and is yet knowable, but only indirectly and in a non-empirical manner. But neither of the two theories seems to have any independent argument to offer against the common-sense view of knowledge as the direct and immediate revelation of things in themselves. In fact, both dismiss this view in an uncritical manner. The phenomenalist brings himself to believe, on the one hand; that man's power of understanding is limited, and, on the other, that the real nature of things is for man an inscrutable mystery. Hence he advocates the doctrine of the unknowability of things in themselves. The representationist agrees with the phenomenalist in assuming, of course, without proof, that our empirical knowledge lacks directness and immediacy and yields only passing shadows of things in themselves. But he differs from the latter in assuming, equally without proof, that our thought in the form of inference, logical construction, etc., unlike our sense-experience, is competent to yield knowledge of the real nature of things.

The fact of the matter is, however, this, that if we do at all speak of a thing as presenting itself to the knower, we must admit that it can do so in one way, and one way only, viz., directly and immediately. For, if it is held to do so otherwise, viz., indirectly and mediately—that is, through an intermediary—then that which could be said to present itself to the knower should be the intermediary itself, so that we would have no means of admitting, or even speaking of, the thing which is said to present itself to the knower indirectly and mediately.

Now, to speak of a thing as presenting itself to a knower, no matter whether directly and immediately or indirectly and mediately, would be meaningless if it were not a fact that the thing exists independently, which obviously goes to show that the independent existence of the thing known is prior to the directness and immediacy of knowledge. But, then, a thing cannot be spoken of as existing independently except in so far as it presents itself to the knower directly and immediately, which obviously brings out the priority of the directness and immediacy of knowledge to the independent existence of the thing known. What follows then is that both these things are equally essential to the nature of knowledge, and neither can be regarded as prior to, or more fundamental than, the other. But this is a truth which has been ignored

by most of the current theories of knowledge. Phenomenalism and representationism admit in common the independent existence of the thing known; but they equally deny the directness and immediacy of knowledge. Truths, if ignored, have, however, a peculiar way of taking vengeance for their being treated in that manner. As the history of philosophy shows, both these doctrines are apt to develop into idealism which affirms what they deny, viz., the directness and immediacy of knowledge, and denies what they affirm, viz., the independent existence of the thing known. The admission of the directness and immediacy of knowledge on the part of idealism is, however, rendered as meaningless by its denial of the independent existence of the object of knowledge as the admission of the independent existence of the object of knowledge on the part of phenomenalism and representationism is by their denial of the directness and immediacy of knowledge.

*The Postulates of a Theory of
Knowledge*

The foregoing section has sufficiently indicated that certain propositions need to be taken for granted in a theory of knowledge, and has also brought most of them to clear light. Nevertheless, it would be worth while to state them in a systematic way, although this would involve repetition of many of the things that have already been said.

The first and foremost of these propositions is that knowledge is ultimately a relational phenomenon, involving the subject and the object held in a unique relationship. And to grant this is, by implication, to take it for granted that knowledge is not an entity nor a quality nor again an act or a process of the mind, and that the subject and the object are ultimate and irreducible.

Secondly, it is to be granted that things outside of us are knowable or intelligible, no matter whether or not they are actually known to, or understood by, us. Had this not been so, we would never have been able to know or to understand anything at all. The very fact that we know things implies that they are knowable. But this truth is completely lost upon the phenomenologists, the philosophers who hold that things in themselves are essentially unknown and unknowable. The idealist, on the other hand, is guilty of exaggerating the truth by holding that things in themselves are not only knowable, but are essentially known, as is evident from his doctrine: '*esse is percipi*'.

Thirdly, we shall miss the true sense of knowledge, viz., as the revelation to the knower of something other than himself, unless we take it for granted that the object known exists independently. The basis of this postulate lies in an immediate deliverance of experience, viz., the given-ness of the object of knowledge. And its validity cannot be questioned by any theory of knowledge except that which, while being opposed to the verdict of common sense, is, as shown above with reference to idealism, based on the a priori and uncritical metaphysical doctrine known as spiritualism.

Fourthly, if we accept, and there is no reason why we should not, the verdict of common sense as our guiding principle, then we cannot but take it for granted that our knowledge of things is direct and immediate. Nevertheless, it is to be admitted that belief in the directness and immediacy of knowledge lacks that immediate certainty which characterizes the belief in the independent existence of the object of knowledge. This is due to the fact that the latter belief is forced upon us by an immediate deliverance of our experience, viz., the given-ness of the object, whereas the former has no such compelling force to determine it. What the fact of the given-ness of the object of knowledge immediately means is that this object exists independently, but not that the object as given is identical with the object in itself, which is signified by the directness and immediacy of knowledge. Nevertheless, common sense has two logical reasons to fall back upon in defence of its postulation of the directness and immediacy of knowledge. In the first place, it has only to awaken itself to the logical implication of the cognate postulate that the object of knowledge exists independently. As previously observed, we cannot speak of a thing as existing independently except in so far as we know the thing itself directly and immediately. So once we grant, as we are by an immediate deliverance of our experience compelled to do, that the thing known exists independently, we have no option but also to grant that we know the independently existing thing, and that our knowledge of it is direct and immediate. Secondly, the discovery of the fact that those theories of knowledge which deny the directness and immediacy of knowledge are based upon unwarranted assumptions lends an additional logical support to common sense in its granting what these theories deny.

Fifthly, as regards the knowledge which we ordinarily have in our normal adult life, and which alone admits of proper investigation in

epistemology, it is to be postulated that it is essentially cognitive judgment. And once this is done, two more propositions are naturally to be granted. One is that knowledge as judgment is originally endowed with a *claim* to truth. This does not, however, mean that every cognitive judgment *is* true. On the contrary, a given cognitive judgment, so the other proposition goes, *is* either true or false. And this indicates the importance of the distinction between truth and falsity in the field of perceptual experience.

Let us, however, admit, and we cannot but admit, that it is given to us to try and improve our knowledge of things so as to reduce as far as possible the chances of our falling into error. But that does not warrant the view which has been held by some philosophers, viz., that our desideratum is a kind of non-judgmental or rather supra-judgmental apprehension of reality which is above the distinction between truth and error. The admission of the possibility of such apprehension, no matter whether it is conceived of as faith born of moral, religious or aesthetic experience or as a kind of direct and immediate intuition to which the instinctive awareness on the part of brutes may be regarded as the nearest approach, betrays a tendency to shoot beside the mark by assuming that things may be known in a manner different from that in which it is natural for us to know them. The fact is that it is only with regard to the question of the *reality* of things, not with regard to that of *our knowledge* of them, that the distinction between truth and error is without meaning. That being so, to admit such a thing as supra-judgmental apprehension of things standing above the distinction between truth and error is to exchange the metaphysical point of view for that of epistemology in the name of upholding the latter. This obviously points to an absurdity which can be avoided only by granting that in the field of our perceptual experience the distinction between truth and error is ultimate—ultimate in the sense that here in this field there is no common ground where truth and error can merge into each other so as to be reduced to a state of neutrality.

The Problem of a Theory of Knowledge

What has been said last in the foregoing section well serves to indicate the nature of the problem which a theory of knowledge has to investigate. In the field of perceptual experience, it has been said, the distinction between truth and error is ultimate and irreducible. This should

not, however, be construed as meaning that the distinction in question is inexplicable or is in no need of explanation. It is, no doubt, true that so long as we remain confined to a given cognitive judgment we are only sure about its claim to truth, and can have no certain knowledge as to whether it *is* true or false. Yet there is no gainsaying the fact that we do find ourselves in a position to judge some of our cognitive judgments as true and some others as false, despite the fact that all of them are alike characterized by an original claim to truth. This argues the possibility of a way of distinguishing between true and false cognitive judgments. And what that way is is a problem, indeed a legitimate problem for a special enquiry, which may be called the theory of knowledge.

It may be observed in passing that a theory of knowledge has naturally to depend on an investigation of the facts about knowledge with a view to ascertaining which of them are ultimate and inexplicable and which stand in need of explanation. Such an investigation, though no part of a theory of knowledge properly so called, is yet essential to it as a propaedeutic. Unconscious of the need of such a propaedeutic to epistemology, theories of knowledge, like phenomenalism, representationism and idealism, have been misled into problems which are at best ways of escape from the real problem concerning perceptual experience. It is precisely for this reason that it is necessary to show, as we have tried to do in this essay as well as in the essay on 'Towards a Theory of Sense-perception', that the so-called epistemological problems with which philosophers have generally been concerned arise in a false perspective.

The object of this essay is not, however, so ambitious as to offer a solution to the problem which has been stated above to be the only genuine problem for a theory of knowledge to investigate. It is a more modest one, viz., to indicate the peculiar character of the solution in demand. To this end it is first necessary to notice that in regard to the distinction between true and false perceptual experience there may arise three distinct questions relating to (*a*) their respective physical, physiological and psychological conditions, (*b*) the metaphysical status of their respective objects and (*c*) the criterion of the distinction between them regarded as perceptual judgments.

There is no gainsaying the fact that our perceptual experience is determined by certain physical stimuli coming from outside and certain

physiological and psychological processes occurring within us. This is true equally of our veridical and erroneous perceptual experience. But that does not mean that these determining factors in the case of our erroneous perception of a thing are the same as those in the case of our veridical perception of the same thing. On the contrary, there should naturally be some difference between the two sets of determining factors, corresponding to the difference between the perceptual experience in the two cases. Hence the plausibility of the first of the three questions mentioned above. But the point, as we shall see below, is that this question is, on the one hand, difficult to answer, and, on the other, does not, strictly speaking, concern a theory of knowledge.

The physical, physiological and psychological conditions of our perceptual experience, whether true or false, vary so widely from one case to another that a systematic and generalized account of them seems to be unattainable. Reference to these conditions may, of course, be of use in understanding how perceptual experience *originates*, and, specially, *how* there arises difference between true and false perception. But what seems feasible in this regard is only to have an account of them with their varying characteristics in various cases without the hope of attaining a general principle of the psycho-physical explanation of the distinction between true and false perception. Even supposing that such a general principle may come within our reach, the task of discovering it would belong to those branches of knowledge that are specially competent to deal with the physical, physiological and psychological conditions of perceptual experience, viz., physics, physiology and psychology, so that, in regard to the psycho-physical explanation of the distinction between true and false perceptual experience, the service of these sciences is quite sufficient, and there should be nothing left for a theory of knowledge specially to do.

But the real point is that the idea of the psycho-physical explanation of the distinction in question is, strictly speaking, irrelevant to a theory of knowledge. For this explanation would at best serve to show how difference between true and false perception occurs, but can give no information as to what constitutes this difference itself or what is meant by the truth or the falsity of a perceptual experience. Nor can it account for the relation of opposition that really subsists between truth and falsity; because the physical, physiological and psychological factors which respectively determine the occurrence of the true and the false

perception of a thing, however they may differ, are obviously not mutually opposed as truth and falsity are.

The truth that should be realized in this connection is, however, this, that our perceptual experience, though a natural phenomenon, is different from other natural phenomena in that it involves cognitive judgment, and is, in this aspect, characterized by a new quality, truth or falsity. As a natural phenomenon, perceptual experience, of course, admits of causal explanation. But in its peculiar aspect as cognitive judgment it obviously falls outside of the scope of this kind of explanation. If epistemology be regarded, as it ought to be, as a separate enquiry, distinct from psychology, to which science it perhaps bears the closest relation and with which it is, therefore, apt to be easily confused, then there is no getting away from admitting that its direct concern is not with the question of the psycho-physical conditions of perceptual experience but with that of truth and falsity relating to that aspect of perceptual experience in which it is in a class apart from other natural phenomena.

Let us turn our attention to the second of the three questions already mentioned, the plausibility of which follows from the consideration that just as a true and a false perception differ in regard to their physical, physiological and psychological conditions, so do they differ in regard to the metaphysical status of their objects. It is, however, necessary in this connection to observe that on account of its inherent claim to truth, a perceptual judgment should be held to *mean* an independently existing thing, unless and until *its* truth comes to be questioned for some reason or other, or it is definitely proved to be false. Let us then consider how differently this implication of its original claim to truth is affected according as it is established as true or false. The answer to this question would obviously serve to determine the metaphysical status of the objects of true and false perceptual experiences respectively.

Now, a perceptual judgment is established as true in so far as its original claim to truth remains uncontradicted, with the result that it persists in meaning an independently existing thing. That being so, the status of the object of a true perceptual experience is definable as independent existence, or, in brief, *existence*. On the other hand, a perceptual judgment is established as false in so far as its original claim to truth is superseded or cancelled by that of another perceptual judg-

ment, with the result that its objective meaning lapses and the object meant by it is discovered to be lacking in independent existence. But something more needs to be observed about the status of the object meant by a perceptual judgment which is established as false. Since the object meant by a perceptual judgment originally claims to be an independent existence and bears no claim to any other status, it must be called a *non-existence* if the judgment that means it is established as false. The possibility of characterizing it in any other way, say, as a mental existence, or as an entity, neither physical nor mental, or as a logical subsistent is obviously precluded *ab initio*. Thus unlike the respective psycho-physical conditions of a true and a false perception, which only differ, the respective objects of these two kinds of perceptual experience are, from the point of view of their metaphysical status, contradictorily opposed.

To hold that the object of a false perceptual experience is a non-existence is not, however, to imply that this experience is devoid of content. On the contrary, when, for example, I perceive a rope as a snake, my perceptual experience has contents. But the fact is that some of the contents of my experience in this case are similar to some of the contents which my experience should have had in order that I could perceive an existent snake. It is partly on account of this similarity and partly on account of certain physical, physiological or psychological factors, specially the last, which might have then come into operation, that I had the illusory perception of the snake. That being so, it would be most improper to hold that false perception involves actually given contents in the same sense as veridical perception--a view that has often been advocated by philosophers, including the idealists like Berkeley and many of the realists of recent times, in terms of the doctrine of 'the reality of all sense-data'. This view misses the truth that perceptual knowledge consists in cognitive judgment established as true, and is vitiated by the erroneous assumption that this knowledge is bare awareness of given sense-contents.

That the fact of false perception may give rise to the problem as to the origin of its object none can deny. On the contrary, it is perhaps natural for the thinking mind to enquire how there arises the false show of an object, or how there appears an object which does not exist independently. The legitimacy of this problem cannot be doubted either. But the problem in this form obviously belongs to the special field of

psychology, and not to that of philosophy in general or metaphysics in particular, although its solution may be of interest to philosophy including metaphysics. The problem concerning the status of the object of false perception, with which we are at present concerned, seems, on the other hand, to be such that it cannot be assigned to any field of enquiry except metaphysics. But, then, it makes no room for the controversy to which metaphysicians have generally surrendered it. As seen above, the object of a false perceptual experience lacks independent existence so that it is out of place in the spatio-temporal world. Again, since its original claim is to belong to the spatio-temporal world, and since this claim is cancelled on the discovery of the falsity of the perceptual judgment by which it is meant, it would be arbitrary to assign it to a supposedly alternative order of being, mental or logical or neutral (that is, neither physical nor mental). Thus, unlike the object of a veridical perception which has a determinate status, being a part of the spatio-temporal world, the object of a false perception is a homeless entity, a phantom with a status absolutely indeterminate and indeterminable. Philosophers have, however, ignored this truth more often than not, and undertaken the absurd task of assigning to the object of false perception a determinate status of some kind or other. But what is still more reprehensible is that they have thereby produced a prejudicial effect upon the understanding of the nature and status of the object of veridical perception.

In fact, it is mainly with a view to assigning to the object of false perception a determinate status that philosophers have often admitted such things as the so-called 'sense-data' in distinction from physical things themselves, and have held that the objects of false perceptions, like those of veridical perceptions, are made up of sense-data. But, in view of the fact that the objects of false perceptions are lacking in independent existence, some of these philosophers have conceived of sense-data as non-physical in one sense or another, viz., as mental or logical or neutral. Some others have, however, realized that such conceptions of sense-data cannot serve to account for the unquestionable physical or spatio-temporal character of the objects of our veridical perceptions. And, in consequence, they have come to conceive of sense-data as physical.

But what sense is there in admitting at all such things as sense-data in distinction from physical things themselves and yet calling the

former physical? The doctrine of sense-data is invoked specially with a view to assigning a determinate status to the objects of false perceptions—the objects which do in vain claim to belong to the spatio-temporal world. To this end the conception of sense-data as non-physical alone seems appropriate. But if, for the reason mentioned above, the reason which the advocates of the conception of sense-data as physical have in view, the conception of sense-data as non-physical needs to be abandoned, then that which the situation demands is not the acceptance of the conception of sense-data as physical but the rejection of the doctrine of sense-data as such and the acceptance of the modified common-sense view which holds that, *normally*, the direct and immediate object of our perceptual experience is an independently existing physical thing, not a chaotic mass of sense-data out of which the physical thing is to be constructed. All that can, from this point of view, be said about the object of false perception is, however, that its claim to exist independently or to be a part of the spatio-temporal world, which is, in fact, the only claim to a determinate status that it bears, is null and void, and, consequently, that it is a kind of thing, the status of which is metaphysically indeterminate and indeterminable. And this is a position from which the advocates of the view of sense-data as physical can really have no escape.

The above discussion may be summed up thus. The doctrine of sense-data owes its origin to the idea of assigning a determinate status to the objects of our false perceptions. This idea obviously demands the view of sense-data as non-physical in one sense or another. But this view, in whichever form be it advocated, would leave the undeniable physical character of the objects of our veridical perceptions unaccounted for. Hence the demand for the view of sense-data as of a physical character. But, then, on this view, there would hardly be any reason to prevent the absurd conclusion that the objects of our false perceptions are as much a part of the spatio-temporal world as the objects of our veridical perceptions. In consequence, the very idea of assigning a determinate status to the object of false perception as distinguished from that of veridical perception would lose its point. Thus the doctrine of sense-data is involved in a dilemma which cannot be resolved except by means of its liquidation. Let us only add that nothing in the epistemological position of the advocates of the doctrine of sense-data is more shocking and offensive to common sense than

their queer fancy for the conception of the objects of perceptual knowledge as products of 'construction' instead of as *given*.

On the question concerning the respective status of the objects of true and false perceptions we have, therefore, no option but to accept the position that the former are independently existing physical things forming part of the spatio-temporal world, whereas the latter are non-existent, which means that their status is metaphysically indeterminate and indeterminable. Accordingly, we may venture to suggest that philosophers should rest content with the humble confession of their inability to offer any solution worth the name to the problem of error in its metaphysical aspect, instead of trying to show off by inventing the doctrine of sense-data and thereby introducing unnecessary complications into the understanding of perceptual experience, in the name of solving the same. The only solution, if solution it at all be called, that this problem admits of, is solely dependent upon the consideration of the difference that happens to the truth-claim originally borne by perceptual judgments according as they remain uncontradicted and are thereby established as true or come to be contradicted and are thus shown to be false. And this means that the problem is one, the treatment of which does not take us beyond the epistemological postulate relating to the original truth-claim of perceptual judgments, and, consequently, that it belongs to what we have called the propaedeutic to a theory of knowledge, and does not come within the province of epistemology as such, not to speak of its entering, further, into the field of metaphysics.

In the light of the foregoing discussion it may finally be stated that epistemology as a separate enquiry with a specific problem of its own cannot be possible except on two conditions: (i) that the question relating to the criterion of the distinction between true and false perceptual judgments is separate from, not reducible to, the question of the distinction between the respective physical, physiological and psychological conditions of true and false perceptions or between the respective metaphysical status of the objects of these two kinds of perception; (ii) that this question cannot be suitably dealt with by logic, the branch of knowledge which is usually held to be specially concerned with the distinction between truth and error.

The validity of the first proposition has already been argued thus. The distinction between the physical, physiological and psychological

conditions of the true perception of a thing and those of a false perception of it does not have the sense of opposition which the distinction between truth and falsity has, so that the latter distinction is not reducible to the former. Moreover, the former distinction pertains to an extrinsic aspect of perceptual experience, and hence is unable to bring out the meaning of the latter, which, really, pertains to the intrinsic aspect of this experience. The distinction between the metaphysical status of the object of a true perception and that of the object of a false perception is, however, one that holds between two opposites. But, then, it also pertains to an extrinsic aspect of perceptual experience and so is equally unable to express the distinction between truth and falsity which pertains to the intrinsic aspect of this experience.

As regards the second proposition, it is necessary to bear in mind that logic has, especially in the course of its later history, passed through many and various changes with the result that it is difficult to ascertain what exactly its subject-matter is. In view of this circumstance, to relegate the problem of the distinction between true and false perceptual judgments to the province of logic would be tantamount to throwing it into a state of utter confusion. But the real difficulty lies elsewhere. In spite of the changes in its method and subject-matter to which its history testifies, logic is essentially abstract, absolutely unconcerned with matters of fact. It can only provide the principles of formal consistency, which, obviously, are of no special importance in the determination of the distinction between true and false perceptual judgments that are solely concerned with matters of fact. And it is really on this account that that which we have come to regard as the genuine epistemological problem cannot be dealt with by logic.

Conclusion

The so-called epistemological problems relating to the possibility of perceptual knowledge are rooted in misunderstanding due to the failure to recognize the ultimate character of one or another aspect of the complex perceptual situation. Therefore, they deserve to be rejected as spurious. On the other hand, the fact that our perceptual experience is not always true, but sometimes false, unavoidably gives rise to the problem of the distinction between truth and falsity in the field of this experience. But this problem is one the solution of which is not avail-

able from physiological psychology or metaphysics or even logic. Hence the inevitable conclusion that there should be a distinct and separate enquiry called theory of knowledge aiming at the solution of this one legitimate problem that arises in connection with our knowledge of the external world.

III

WHITHER CONSCIOUSNESS?

OF all branches of knowledge, philosophy is perhaps the most unfortunate in not having its concepts always clear and in not fixing and defining the meanings of the terms it uses. Consciousness is undoubtedly one of the terms about the meaning of which there prevails great uncertainty in the fields of philosophy and psychology. In view of this circumstance an attempt will be made in this essay to enquire into the true meaning of this term and to lay bare its implications.

Consciousness, Experience and Knowledge

The key to the understanding of the true meaning of consciousness lies in realizing that this term conveys the sense which is also conveyed by two others, experience and knowledge. Of these three terms, knowledge seems to be the most satisfactory, having a meaning clearer than that of the other two, although in certain quarters of philosophical thought there is a tendency to mystify it too. Knowledge is ordinarily understood, and quite rightly, in the sense of apprehension, our apprehension of the external world being regarded as knowledge *par excellence*. But it may be understood in a wider sense by including within it our apprehension of our own body and bodily states. The apprehension of the states of our own selves may also be included, provided, of course, our selves may be said to have a separate existence from our bodies, and the self also may be held to know itself, no matter whether in the same sense as it knows the external world and its body or bodily states, or in a different sense. The question whether the self exists separately from the body, and whether it can know itself in any sense, will be discussed later. Meanwhile, it is of interest to note that knowledge in the wider or the narrower sense may be regarded as synonymous with experience and consciousness in as much as the latter may be said to have the meaning of apprehension in the same wider or narrower sense.

But there are certain respects in which knowledge in the sense of apprehension seems to have a wider scope than either experience or consciousness understood in the same sense. First, we may be said to *know* mathematical and logical truths and the various kinds of value, but we cannot, strictly, speak of our experience or consciousness of these things. Of course, expressions like moral experience, aesthetic experience, moral consciousness and aesthetic consciousness are current in philosophical literature. But they, obviously, do not mean knowledge or apprehension, but a peculiar kind of feeling or emotion. Secondly, we may speak of our knowledge of supersensible beings such as God. But neither experience nor consciousness is ordinarily regarded as having the sense of this kind of knowledge. Expressions like religious experience and religious consciousness do not really mean knowledge of God but a kind of mystical feeling. Besides, and this is more important, knowledge may be taken to involve not only the subject-object relation, that is, bare apprehension of objects, but judgment, whereas consciousness and experience are usually regarded as having the former sense but not the latter.

It is, however, necessary to take notice of the fact that philosophers, while understanding these terms in the sense of apprehension, have generally understood them in another sense also, viz., as a kind of entity or quality, and have thereby undermined their former sense, which is, in fact, their true sense. As regards experience, an entire school of philosophical thought, viz., older empiricism, held that it is constituted by bits of mental existence or 'ideas' which, in the view of this school, are the very stuff of which all concrete existences, whether selves or physical things, are made. Then in the later history of philosophy, experience rechristened as 'immediate experience', relieved of its original atomistic character and viewed either statically or dynamically, has been regarded as ultimately real by influential thinkers like Bergson, Bradley and William James.¹ Again, in recent realistic philosophy, experience has sometimes been thought away from its earlier mental character as well as from its later absoluteness, and yet has been regarded as the basic material of all kinds of concrete existence.

With regard to consciousness, Descartes and his followers held that

¹ According to Bradley, immediate experience is static, while in the view of Bergson and William James it is dynamic. William James, however, did not accept the absolutistic conception of immediate experience which Bergson held in common with Bradley.

it is not mere apprehension on the part of the self, but is the self's essential quality. And they held the same view with regard to knowledge in so far as they treated it as a mode of consciousness. In introspective psychology, consciousness came to mean a kind of entity in virtue of the view that it comprises not only the so-called mental acts or processes but also bits of mental existence distinguishable under several heads: sensations, images, etc. Quite a curious form of the entitative conception of consciousness was presented by materialistic metaphysics in terms of the view that consciousness is a sort of evanescent being called the epiphenomenon of matter. Opposed to this materialistic conception of consciousness is Leibnizian panpsychism which, under the influence of the old Aristotelian idea of the kinship between body and soul, arrived at the view that consciousness characterized by infinite variations of degree constitutes the inner essence of all concrete existence, whether material or spiritual. The tendency to attach exaggerated importance to consciousness, which thus characterized the thought of Leibniz, has persisted in several recent thinkers like McDougall and Strong.

Lastly, as regards knowledge, it has been understood not only, as mentioned above, in the sense of an essential quality of the individual self, but in that of the essence of Absolute Reality, as is evident from Hegel's and his followers' view of ultimate reality as Self-conscious Absolute Spirit.

The Nature of the Philosophical Method

Let us now take another preliminary step with a view to ascertaining the place of consciousness in philosophical investigations. To this end it is first necessary to understand the nature of the philosophical method. The peculiarity of the philosophical method may be best understood in the light of a comparison between our mode of procedure in philosophy and in other fields, especially science and mathematics. Science takes for granted the reality of the world comprising physical things and living beings, which is the subject-matter of its study. Mathematics, likewise, proceeds with the initial acceptance of the validity of some conception of space, etc., which constitute the foundation of the truths with which it deals. Both science and mathematics may, therefore, be said to be, in a sense, dogmatic in their procedure. That being so, it is natural to expect that there would be some enquiry in which the

dogmatism of the natural and the mathematical sciences is transcended in the light of criticism. Philosophy, it is needless to say, claims to be the enquiry in question, with a new method which may be called 'criticism'. By pursuing this method, philosophy should be in a position to evaluate its own assumptions as well as those of science and mathematics and also to discover the special subject-matter of its own investigation.

What, then, is philosophical criticism? The answer to this question may immediately be given thus. Criticism consists in accepting scepticism as the first step, then granting that which is just sufficient to remove the initial doubt, and afterwards proceeding gradually to make affirmations, each succeeding affirmation being tested in the light of that which immediately precedes, and the affirmation immediately following the initial doubt being the first and the most fundamental in the chain of such affirmations. The idea of such criticism originated in Descartes, not in Kant, though the very conception of the critical method of philosophical investigation is specially associated with the name of Kant. But Descartes, as will be evident from what follows, failed to apply his own conception of criticism to his actual philosophical investigations.

With regard to this conception of the philosophical method it may, however, be asked, and quite pertinently, why scepticism should be regarded as the initial step in a philosophical enquiry. The reply would simply be that in philosophy truth cannot be attained except through doubt or questioning. Strictly speaking, we should accept nothing as true except in so far as our doubts about its being true are somehow resolved. Since truths are nothing to us except in so far as we can recognize them as such in the light of our own judgment, however limited it may be, scepticism must be regarded as more or less essential to all our enquiries and of special importance in philosophy.

Next arises the question why the sceptical attitude, if once adopted, should not be adopted once for all, and why should there be the necessity of affirming anything at all. In reply, it cannot but be admitted that there seems to be no logical absurdity about doubt continued *ad indefinitum*. Or, in other words, one may, without contradicting oneself, stick fast to unending scepticism or live in a world of perpetual negation. But the fact is that one does not choose to do so. This is perhaps due to the very nature of man as man.

*The Fundamental Philosophical Principle
and its Analysis*

What should be accepted as the initial affirmation in a philosophical enquiry is, however, not so difficult a question to answer as it seems at first sight to be. In affirming anything, I do so in so far as it is brought to my consciousness. In fact, all our affirmations are set in the background of our consciousness of something or other. So, the surest of all affirmations that I can make is a *situation* which can be described by saying: 'I am conscious of something.' Such a situation is obviously complex and analysable into three elements: the 'I' or the knower; the thing known; the former's consciousness of the latter or, in brief, consciousness.

Now, as regards the 'I', we can certainly speak of it as an existent. But in doing so we must for the present admit that its existence occupies only that moment at which it is conscious, and does not extend beyond it on either side. For the situation in which the 'I' is an element does not seem immediately to provide us with any reason for admitting this extension. In order to avoid confusion, we may call this 'I' the *subject* in distinction from the *self*, which is usually believed to exist not only at the moment at which it is conscious but also beyond it.

The 'something', of which the subject is conscious, should, for a similar reason, be said to exist only at the moment at which it is presented as an object to a subject, and not beyond it. Accordingly, it should be called the *object* as distinguished from the independently existing thing. Let us now try and find out what kind or kinds of things may come under the category of 'object'. There is no doubt that to this category belong things such as the tree, the chair, etc., although in speaking of these things as objects we must for the present refer to their existence only at the moment at which they are the objects of some subject's consciousness. The question whether things of any other kind can come under this category has already been answered in part. We have seen that we cannot be said to be *conscious* of mathematical and logical truths or of things such as God, at least in the same sense as we are conscious of things such as the chair, etc. What this really means is that these things do not come under the 'something' involved in the situation which we are to regard as the surest of all affirmations and as the fundamental basis of philosophical enquiry.

But it is far from us to suggest that the reality of things like God can never be affirmed. At any rate, it is not unlikely that the question of their reality would break out at some stage of the philosophical enquiry beyond the initial affirmation.

As regards the question whether the self can be an object, the answer would depend upon what is meant by this term. If it means a thing of the same kind as the tree, etc., for example, our body, then the self can certainly be an object. But if it means the mere subject, then, obviously, it cannot be an object without ceasing to be what it is. Another sense of the term may be possible, in which the self may be said to exist not merely at the moment at which it is conscious or figures as the subject, but also beyond it. But this sense of the term, as previously mentioned, is not immediately admissible and so does not concern us for the present. How the question just now before us should be answered in case its admission be necessary may, however, be left for later consideration. In any case, the fact stands out that the meaning of the term 'self' is uncertain, which immediately leaves us with no option but to conclude that the contents of our consciousness are co-extensive with what is called the 'external world', although we are not yet entitled to characterize this world as 'external' in the usual sense of this term.

The Status of the Subject, the Object and Consciousness

Regarding the existential status of the elements involved in what we have regarded as the fundamental philosophical affirmation, our position so far is this. The subject exists at the moment at which it is conscious; the object also exists at the moment at which it is brought to the consciousness of some subject; consciousness may likewise be said to exist at the moment at which it occurs. They may thus be said to exist in one common sense. The question, however, arises whether any of them can be said to exist in any other sense.

Of the three elements, it is the 'object' that comes out first to lay claim to existence in a sense wider and more comprehensive than the above. In being conscious of an object, the subject is conscious of it as *given*. This obviously points to the existence of the object prior to its being presented to the subject. The object should, therefore, be said to exist not merely in the epistemological sense as the content of consciousness, but also in a metaphysical sense as an extra-mental or independently existing thing. Doubt may, however, be raised against

this position, and quite pertinently, with reference to our erroneous experiences which have objects, but whose objects lack independent existence. But as regards this difficulty, it is to be observed that it is really not so serious as it at first sight seems to be. What we have specially to bear in mind in this connection is that there can be no such thing as an erroneous experience *for us* except in so far as we can somehow know independently existing things, that is, are capable of veridical perception. Further, the object of veridical perception *exists*, whereas that of erroneous experience is *non-existent*, and it is existence which has a determinate metaphysical status, while the status of non-existence is metaphysically indeterminable. It would, therefore, follow that doubt about the independent existence of the object of veridical experience implies, on the one hand, the surrender of the distinction between truth and error at least on the perceptual level, and between existence and non-existence, and, on the other, the adoption of a sceptical attitude which raises nescience above knowledge and the indeterminable above what is determinate or determinable.

The standpoint indicated above calls for the following remarks about certain well-known attempts to conceive of the universe. In the first place, there are thinkers who feel embarrassed by the problem of non-existence and are gripped by a strong desire to see the existent order of the universe as something absolutely above the infection of non-existence. In consequence, they come to conceive of the universe as a realm inhabited by abiding entities such as the Platonic Ideas, or a sphere of absolute identity of the Parmenidean or Advaita-Vedantist description. Secondly, many of the contemporary realists, despite their clear recognition of the distinction between veridical and erroneous perception, hold quite curiously that the existent world comprises the objects of the two opposite kinds of perceptual experience, and thereby make no secret of their mistaken view of the status of the object of erroneous perception. Lastly, those thinkers who construct a scheme of the universe wholly or partly on the basis of a priori notions obviously do so without any recognition of the distinction between existence and non-existence in as much as a conceptual world is a mere possibility in connection with which the question of existence or non-existence does not arise.¹

¹ Spinoza, for example, seems to have regarded the universe as purely conceptual, while Kant construed it as partly empirical and partly conceptual.

Our next question is whether further characterization of the status of consciousness is possible. Let us first enquire whether consciousness can be regarded as an independent existence. Quite obviously it would be absurd to regard it as independent of itself. Nor can it be regarded as independent of the subject or of the object, because there can be no consciousness without a subject whose consciousness it is, or without an object of which it is the consciousness. The fact is that the subject, the object and consciousness are so related among themselves that we cannot regard any one of them as prior to, or independent of, the others unless we have an extraneous reason for doing so. In the case of the object, we found such a reason in the fact of its being *given*, which was sufficient to demonstrate its independent existence. But no such reason seems to be available in the case of consciousness, on the basis of which its independent existence could be argued.

Should the status of consciousness, then, be understood in terms of its dependence upon, or subordination to, either the subject or the object, assuming, of course, that they are themselves independent existences? But this possibility is also ruled out by the fact that consciousness implies, and is also implied by, both the subject and the object at once, and equally necessarily, so that it cannot be said to belong exclusively to the side of the subject or to that of the object. There is, therefore, no justification for holding that consciousness, as philosophers have often believed, is a quality or an act of the self or that it is, as the materialists at one time used to aver, an epiphenomenon of matter. It should, however, be specially observed that the view of consciousness as exclusively related to the self in some sense or other originates in a linguistic fallacy. The fact of my consciousness of something may be expressed by saying: 'I *am* conscious *of* something'. The word 'of' in this statement seems to separate consciousness from the object, whereas the word 'am' seems to throw it into a peculiarly intimate relationship with the self. Hence the view under discussion. But, strictly speaking, consciousness is no more the consciousness *of* an object than *of* a subject. The two 'of's only differ in that they point in two different directions. This difference is due to the peculiar nature of consciousness as such, but has no sense of the dependence of consciousness on the self rather than on the object.

Consciousness can thus be regarded neither as an independent existence nor as in any sense related exclusively to the self or to the

object. How should we, then, characterize its status? The answer is to be found in the light of the following considerations. There is no new fact in the case of consciousness similar to the one we have already found in the case of the object, on the basis of which consciousness could be regarded as something more than a mere element in our fundamental philosophical affirmation. This seems to leave us with no option but to regard consciousness, ultimately, as something actual without being an independent existence. At the same time consciousness must have the peculiarity of fitting in with the new status of the object. It must be of such a nature that the object within it as well as outside it may be identically the same. All this seems to force upon us the conclusion that consciousness is a *relation*, of course, an external one, in which the object is a term.

In bringing in the concept of relation in understanding the status of consciousness we have arrived in a danger-zone of philosophy; for, as the history of philosophy shows, no concept is more apt to be misunderstood or to be understood diversely than this one. A detailed discussion of the problem of relation would, however, be out of proportion to the short space at our disposal. Suffice it to point out here that the true nature of relation has generally escaped the notice of philosophers. The rationalist tradition in philosophy, which sought to understand the universe in terms of self-subsistent permanent entities called substances, obviously neglected the ultimate reality of relation. The same attitude of neglect characterized the old empirical school of philosophy, where its absurdity was also worked out by means of the surrender of the ultimate reality of concrete existences. It is perhaps Kant who, for the first time in the history of modern philosophy, came to recognize the importance of relation as well as of concrete existence. But he treated neither relation nor concrete existence as an ultimate fact. Relation, according to him, is the transcendental effect of the relating activity of the self, so that relating is, in his view, more ultimate than relation as such. In recent philosophy, the reality of relation as well as of concrete existence has again come to be denied by a number of philosophers from the standpoint of absolute identity as opposed to the empirical standpoint of the multiplicity of irrational reals.

An altogether different side of the speculation on the subject of relation has been presented by mathematical logic in the shape of the

view that relations are universal entities. This view, in spite of the fact that it calls relations subsistents as distinguished from existents, really treats them as more real than particular existences by holding that they are permanent and eternally fixed entities like Platonic Ideas.

The correct position with regard to the nature of relation, however, seems to lie midway between the two extremes considered above. Relations including the so-called consciousness or the cognitive relation are as ultimate as particular existences such as the tree, etc. Again, they are as concrete and determinate as the latter. Strictly speaking, there cannot be any such thing as a universal relation just as there is no such thing as a universal concrete object. But, while concrete objects are independent existences, relations are passing *events* holding between particular independent existences. Relations come and go in the course of the life-history of concrete existences without affecting their essential nature, while concrete existences endure from moment to moment. As regards the cognitive relation, when I, for example, open my eyes and look at the table before me, there arises my consciousness of the table, but as soon as I close my eyes that consciousness of mine vanishes, though I and the table remain the same as before.

Now, the conception of consciousness as a relation puts us on the way to further determination of the status of that which figures as the subject in consciousness. As previously seen, consciousness is not only not identical with the subject but cannot also be said to belong to the latter in any sense whatsoever. The two must be distinct. And the exact sense in which the one is to be regarded as distinct from the other is easily deducible from our new finding that consciousness is a relation. Since consciousness is a relation, and since a relation requires at least two terms between which it can subsist, that which figures as the *subject* must be one of the terms in the conscious relation, the other obviously being an independently existing thing which figures as the *object* in the same relation. Thus we come to recognize the significant fact that just as something existing independently of consciousness functions as the object in the conscious relation, so something else existing equally independently of consciousness functions as the subject in the same relation. That being so, one may find it easy at least to guess that this 'something else' regarded as an independent existence is the self.

But by merely showing that that which figures as the subject in consciousness is an independent existence and giving it the name 'self'

we do not really go very far; because the so-called self may, after all, be our own body. When I am conscious of something, it may be my body that is conscious, so that my self, which is said to exist independently of my consciousness and yet to figure as the subject in it, may be my body. This is a position which is not logically absurd nor strange to ordinary people and even to philosophers. But still we should examine it with a view to deciding finally whether it is valid or not.

To this end it may first be asked why in the case of my consciousness of an object anything other than the object itself should at all be said to be conscious of it. May not the question of the knower or the subject be altogether dropped, and may it not, consequently, be held that the object is known of itself and in itself just as a luminous object stands illumined in its own light? The answer should be in the negative for the simple reason that the object that is known is known as something *other* than that which knows it, that is, the subject. The *otherness* which is thus essential to the object as known would be out of the question if the object were known of itself and in itself and not known *to* a subject or a knower. A subject to which the object is presented as the *other* being thus essential to the latter's being known, the question arises as to what this subject is.

Now, so far as our knowledge of external objects is concerned, it may be said that in its case it is our body that functions as the subject, it being understood that that to which these objects are presented as the 'other' is our body. But this position would give rise to a serious difficulty owing to the fact that our body is, in a sense, a part of the external world, and that our body and bodily states may present themselves as *objects* to us or that we may be conscious of them as 'other' than ourselves. In the case of our bodily consciousness at least, the subject should, therefore, be something else than our body. Should we, then, hold that in the case of our knowledge of the so-called external world it is our body that functions as the subject, while in the case of our bodily consciousness that function is performed by something else than our body? But why? There seems to be no reason why that which is subject should not in both cases be one and the same thing which is something other than our body. In any case, the mystery, if there be any, about the possibility of a non-bodily self's being conscious of the so-called external world does not seem to be greater than that which

there may be in connection with the same self's being conscious of its own body and bodily states.

Of course, I do refer to my body not always as *my* body, but often as 'I' or my *self*. Thus I say: 'I am fat', 'I am walking', 'I am shivering', etc. But this only shows that our ordinary use of language is loose, and not governed by the strict demands of truth. It is precisely on this account that I may even refer to my self as *my* self instead of as 'I', just as I may refer to my body as *my* body. But that does not mean that my body stands in the same relation to *myself* as my *self*. The fact is that my self is identical with myself, whereas my body cannot be held to be the same except on the hypothesis which arbitrarily identifies the self with body.

Self and Body

The view of the self as identical with body, though erroneous, is, however, significant in that it points to a peculiarity of the relationship between the two. My relation, whether cognitive or otherwise, with external objects is more or less similar to that which anyone else may have with them. That is why these objects are said to be common to us all. But my relation to my body or bodily states is characterized by a peculiar privacy. No one else can have that peculiarly intimate knowledge of my body or rather bodily states which I can have. My self, while being distinct from my body, is thus held in a unique relationship with it. This position, it is needless to emphasize, is borne out by facts. And its philosophical importance lies in that it points to a theory of the relation of self and body which is more satisfactory than any other of its kind. It is divided from both materialism and spiritualism in virtue of its recognition of the distinction between self and body as irreducible; and at the same time it repudiates dualism by admitting the intimate relation between the two as an ultimate datum.

It may be further noticed that the self's intimate relationship with its body is prior to, but does not necessarily involve, its knowing or being conscious of external objects or its body or bodily states. In fact, the self cannot have conscious relation with anything whatsoever except in so far as the sense-organs and the nervous system, which form part of its body, function in a certain way. In the absence of their functioning, the self only remains in a state of intimate relationship with its body without there being any awareness on its part of the

external world or of its body or bodily states. The truth of this is quite evident from the fact of dreamless sleep. Hence the untenability of the view of the self as essentially conscious.

The Fiction of Self-knowledge

The analysis of consciousness on the foregoing line may be pursued further so as to yield far-reaching conclusions.¹ But in view of the limitation of the scope of this essay we would prefer to bring it to a close by mentioning that from the standpoint adopted here the self cannot be held to know itself. Since knowledge, strictly speaking, is a relation between two distinct terms respectively characterizable as the subject and the object, the possibility of self-knowledge regarded as a form of knowledge properly so called would demand that one and the same thing, viz., the self, is at once the two distinct terms, which is absurd. But, if it still be insisted that we do know ourselves, it would be tantamount to allowing our knowledge of our bodily states to pass for our self-knowledge or to taking refuge in the domain of mysticism against which philosophy has no means of fighting. The truth, however, seems to be that the very question of the possibility of self-knowledge is irrelevant. It is things called 'external' that are capable of being known, while the self is capable of being the knower or the subject, and never an object, in the cognitive relation. Hence it is as unreasonable to say that the self is unknown and unknowable as to say that it is knowable or known to itself. Strictly speaking, the self is just the thing, the existence of which is to be affirmed not on the ground of its being known as an object but on the ground that it is the necessary presupposition of the very possibility of knowledge that is naturally external. It is thus clear that whereas the existence of things other than the self is to be recognized on the testimony of the self, the self itself is in no need of empirical apprehension, but depends solely on what may be called transcendental awareness, for the recognition of its own existence. Indeed, to speak of the self as known to itself as an object is only to indulge in popular thought and language which seldom yield philosophical truth. In any case, the self thus spoken of cannot be the subject of consciousness.

¹ This line of thought has been pursued further in our essay on 'What, then, is Philosophy?'.

IV

THE DOCTRINE OF INNER SENSE

Self-knowledge and Inner Sense in the History of Modern Philosophy from Descartes to Kant

IN the earlier part of the history of modern philosophy both Descartes and Locke admitted outer sense and held that we do apprehend the external world by means of 'ideas' produced in our mind through the affection of our so-called outer sense by external objects. This was an inevitable consequence of a theory of the world which they held in common, viz., that there exist individual selves on one side, and independently existing material things on the other. Descartes, however, denied the possibility of our empirical apprehension of the self by means of 'ideas' of the self's activities; that is, he dismissed the possibility of inner sense. As regards self-knowledge, he held that the only sense in which it is possible is that we can *conceive* the self clearly and distinctly, that is, can have conceptual knowledge of it. Locke, on the other hand, went further in maintaining that we not only apprehend the self but do so in a manner similar to that in which we apprehend the external world viz., by means of sense. In this he obviously gave the widest scope to his empirical theory of knowledge.

As against Locke's doctrine of inner sense, Berkeley held that our knowledge of the self is direct and immediate and does not take place through the medium of 'ideas' of the mind or its activities, as is evident from his application of his concept of 'notion' to self-knowledge. Leibniz also agreed with Berkeley and differed from Locke in so far as he advocated the doctrine of apperception which provides for the directness and immediacy of our knowledge of the self. By thus viewing the nature of self-knowledge, both Berkeley and Leibniz, like Descartes

before them, found themselves in a position to admit the possibility of our knowledge of the self as it is in itself. In this respect, all these three philosophers were divided from Locke and Kant, who came to miss the possibility of our knowledge of the self in itself by advocating the doctrine of inner sense.

Malebranche, however, denied what Descartes and Locke admitted, viz., the independent reality of the external world, and came to hold that the spatio-temporal world is constituted by the ideas of the divine mind. Thereupon he held further that we know the external world by means of thought, and that in knowing it in this manner we ourselves are not independently real, but are mere participants in divine existence. This obviously implied the negation of the doctrine of outer sense which both Descartes and Locke advocated. While Malebranche thus dismissed outer sense, he found it necessary to admit inner sense, but in a sense altogether different from that in which Locke and Kant understood it. Locke held that our inner sense is acted upon by the activities of our mind, and that its immediate contents are the 'ideas' or impressions of our mental acts. But Malebranche was unwilling to advocate that doctrine of inner sense which states that we apprehend the acts of the mind, and not their *contents*, through the affection of our inner sense by these acts. His view seems to have been that inner sense is constituted by those of our mental acts themselves which are not attributable to God, but fall outside of Him, viz., feeling, sensing, desiring, etc. And the objects of inner sense, according to him, are the so-called secondary qualities, viz., colour, smell, etc., exactly the things which, in his view, are not attributable to God, and which both Descartes and Locke called modifications of the mind and yet regarded as the objects of outer sense.

Now, Malebranche's interpretation of the doctrine of inner sense is unavoidable in so far as colour, smell, etc., are regarded as mental existences and hence as internally related to the mental acts of which they are the contents. But considering that they owe their origin to the action of independently existing physical things, Locke found it necessary, as Descartes also may be said to have done, to regard them as the contents of outer sense. Malebranche, of course, absolved himself from this necessity by reducing the material world to the ideas of the divine mind and thereby casting aside, as Berkeley did after him, the ladder by means of which alone one could get at the secondary qualities.

The situation, then, is this. If we regard the secondary qualities as

mental and set aside the question of their origin, our apprehension of them must be held to take place in virtue of inner sense, with the result that Malebranche's position becomes unanswerable. If, on the other hand, they are looked at merely from the point of view of their origin, there is no getting away from Locke's view that they are apprehended by means of outer sense. Hence a dilemma, the seriousness of which was for the first time realized by Kant. The solution of this dilemma from the point of view of Kant may be stated thus. We should accept the doctrine of inner sense in the sense in which Locke advocated it, but Malebranche did not, viz., that we apprehend the mind or rather its activities indirectly and mediately by means of inner sense. But at the same time we should hold that our apprehension of the external world takes place not merely in virtue of outer sense nor merely in virtue of inner sense, but is rather due to both outer and inner sense. Thus did Kant come to differ from Locke with regard to the question of our knowledge of the external world. But as regards our knowledge of the self, he was in complete agreement with Locke in holding the view that it is due to inner sense, and takes place in a manner analogous to that in which our knowledge of the external world does.

The above review shows that, of the modern philosophers from Descartes to Kant, it is only Locke and Kant who associated self-knowledge with the doctrine of inner sense. In consequence, their view of self-knowledge was that the self is known to itself in a manner strictly similar to that in which physical things are known. And in order to establish this view, both of them tried to show that inner sense, the source of our knowledge of the self, is strictly analogous to outer sense, the source of our knowledge of the external world.

*The Attempts of Locke and Kant
to establish Analogy between Inner Sense
and Outer Sense*

In order that they could establish strict analogy between inner sense and outer sense, which they intended to do, both Locke and Kant found it necessary to show two things: (i) that just as we possess outer senses or bodily sense-organs, so we do actually have such a thing as an internal sense-organ or inner sense; (ii) that just as independently existing physical things act on our outer senses and thereby produce in our mind sensations like 'yellow colour', 'heat', etc., so our mind or

rather its activities such as perceiving, thinking, etc., act on our inner sense and thereby produce in our mind 'ideas' corresponding to them.

A. Is there an Inner Sense or Internal Sense-organ?

As regards Locke, he was painfully aware of the fact that no sense-organ is available in the case of inner sense, and exhibited sufficient common sense in realizing that sense is really outer, and that, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as inner sense.¹ Nevertheless, he stated without reason that there is something in us which is 'very like sense', and which can properly be called internal sense.² But immediately after making this statement he perhaps realized that there is little justification for it, and took shelter behind a vaguer concept than inner sense, viz., 'reflection',³ by declaring that inner sense is, in fact, reflection. Locke's position in regard to the first point in the analogy between inner sense and outer sense was thus vague and undecided.

Very different, however, was the position of Kant in regard to this point. For understanding it properly it is first necessary to notice the peculiarity of his view of outer sense, which may be stated thus. Kant, unlike Descartes and the Cartesians, and also Locke, kept himself free of the problem of interaction between body and mind which these philosophers associated with their consideration of outer sense. According to Descartes, physical processes issuing from material objects stimulate the body or rather the brain through the sense-organs, and, as a result of this, sensations arise in the mind. The process intervening between the material objects and the brain is easily explicable, being continuously mechanical. But how on the occurrence of the brain processes which, being bodily, are, in the view of these philosophers, diametrically opposed to mind, there arise sensations in the mind must be an insoluble mystery.

Kant, on the other hand, held that we need not trouble ourselves with the question 'how in a thinking subject outer intuition, viz., that of space, with its filling-in of figure and motion is possible'. 'This is a question' he continued, 'which no human being can possibly answer.'⁴ That sensations are actually presented to us is undeniable, and hence,

¹ Cf. Locke, *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II, ii, 4.

² *Ibid.*, II, i, 4.

³ *Ibid.*, II, i, 3.

⁴ *Critique of Pure Reason*, A, p. 393.

as Kant seems to have thought, their presentation must be taken to be an ultimate datum. He, of course, admitted that by leaving the mind-body problem out of consideration we do leave a 'gap' in our knowledge. But this may be made good by thinking that there is something unknowable, the thing-in-itself, which is the source of our outer sensations.

By proceeding on this line of thought Kant understood outer sense not only independently of the consideration of the action of external objects but also of the rôle which the body or rather the sense-organs are ordinarily held to play in the production of sensations. Thus outer sense, which, according to Kant's predecessors as well as physiological psychology, receives sensations in virtue of the function of the sense-organs, has, in Kant's view, no reference to such function. Our reason for calling it 'outer', according to Kant, would be that the presentations which it receives have their source outside the self, not within it. There is no additional reason. Accordingly, Kant defined outer sense as a 'property of our mind'¹ or a 'capacity (receptivity)',² in virtue of which the 'mind'³ or rather the subject is 'affected' in certain ways by things-in-themselves outside it and, as a result, receives outer sensations.

It is, however, curious that Kant, in spite of professing to avoid his predecessors' ontological conception of the self as the soul-substance, and to treat it as a mere subject, attributed to it such characteristics as 'capacity', 'receptivity', etc. No less curious it is that Kant should yet have declared that we are absolutely in the dark with regard to the possibility of sensibility. On this point his own statement is: 'How this peculiar property of sensibility itself is possible, . . . this cannot be further answered because we require these (faculties) for all our answers and for all our thinking about objects'.⁴ What Kant meant here is obviously that we are required to admit the faculty of sensibility in order to explain the possibility of sense-perception, but we do not know whether it belongs to the self or exists in any other manner. He did not, however, always stick to this view. In so far as he identified the self with transcendental apperception he ascribed the faculty of the understanding to the self. And then, by stating that understanding and sensibility may have a common root, he suggested the possibility of

¹ Ibid., A, p. 22; B, p. 37.

² Ibid., A, p. 19; B, p. 33.

³ Kant should be excused for using the term 'mind' in this connection.

⁴ *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysic*, Section 36.

the latter's belonging to the self. He even went so far as to declare: 'It is yet precisely in the mind that the secret of the source of our sensibility is located.'¹ All this certainly goes to show that Kant could not get rid of the prevailing way of understanding the self in terms of faculties. But it also shows what is specially important for our immediate purpose, viz., that Kant's position with regard to sensibility is characterized by a considerable degree of uncertainty. If, however, Kant be taken to have meant, as he seems to have done, that the question of the possibility of our sensibility cannot be finally answered, then this question should obviously have been in his case as difficult as in the case of Descartes and Locke had been the question: how sensations can arise on the occurrence of brain processes. The difficulty which thus presented itself to Kant related also to his view of inner sense with which we are specially concerned, in so far as he conceived inner sense as parallel to, and co-ordinate with, outer sense.

Another point in Kant's view of outer sense which has an important bearing upon his view of inner sense may be stated as follows. As already seen, Kant left aside the consideration of the operations of the sense-organs as well as the action of 'material objects' in understanding the production of sensations. But he did not for that reason lose sight of the qualitative and quantitative differences of sensations. These differences he, however, explained merely with reference to the difference of the 'mode' in which the subject is affected by the thing-in-itself in virtue of outer sense, while maintaining that we are absolutely unable to determine whether there is one outer sense or many such senses and whether there is one thing-in-itself or many. In viewing inner sense on the analogy of outer sense, as he intended to do, he could likewise state that it is impossible for us to ascertain whether there is one inner sense or many, thereby demonstrating another aspect of the difficulty of his view of inner sense. Kant did not, however, always stick to the present position about outer sense. He spoke very frequently of 'outer senses' as well as of 'things-in-themselves', which shows that he reverted from time to time to his predecessors' way of understanding outer sense with reference to the operations of the sense-organs, which he really meant to avoid. It is, therefore, no wonder that Kant, who wanted to view inner sense on the strict analogy of outer sense, came at times to use inner sense also in the plural and thereby rendered his doctrine of

¹ *Critique of Pure Reason*, A, p. 278; B, p. 334.

inner sense all the more difficult. A glaring instance of such use is to be found in his definition of psychology as the physiology of 'inner senses', corresponding to his definition of physics as the physiology of the objects of the 'outer senses'.¹

Nevertheless, there is no denying the fact that by leaving out the consideration of the sense-organs from his view of outer sense Kant gained an advantage in regard to the understanding of inner sense on the analogy of the outer. The sense-organs, 'external' and 'internal' as they are called in psychology, convey to us impressions from physical things and our body respectively, in either case from the not-self. And we perhaps cannot point to any sense-organ which could be regarded as the special means by which the self can have 'intuitions' or 'ideas' of itself. That being so, we cannot at all admit such a thing as inner sense if reference to sense-organ is essential to it. But so far as Kant is concerned, this difficulty does not arise in as much as such reference, in his view, is no more essential to inner sense than to outer sense. He may thus be said to have avoided Locke's difficulty by holding that reference to sense-organs is absolutely inessential to the understanding of sensibility as such, and that strict analogy between inner sense and outer sense is not affected in the least by the fact that whereas in the case of outer sense there are sense-organs, in the case of inner sense there is none. Strictly speaking, in Kant's case inner sense can be said to be perfectly parallel to outer sense provided only it can be established that just as the self is affected by the thing-in-itself outside of it, in virtue of the 'receptivity' called outer sense, so it is affected by itself or rather its activities in virtue of a similar 'receptivity' called inner sense. This brings us to the consideration of the second of the two requirements for the establishment of strict analogy between inner sense and outer sense.

B. Is Inner Sense affected by the Activities of the Mind?

Since Locke, as previously seen, can neither define nor point to any such thing as inner sense, he cannot naturally speak with certainty of inner sense as being affected or acted upon by the activities of the mind. In his treatment of the outer sense Locke states clearly that external objects 'do affect' outer senses in various ways, and that the latter, as a result of such affection, convey to our mind the various kinds of sensa-

¹ Ibid., A, p. 381. Also James Ward, *A Study of Kant*, p. 142, n. 1.

tions.¹ But in his statement of inner sense he does not clearly and unambiguously say that the activities of the mind 'affect' our inner sense, nor that the latter, in virtue of such affection, conveys to our mind ideas corresponding to the former. On the contrary, he states at one time that when the soul comes to 'reflect on' or 'consider' the operations of the mind, the latter convey to our mind ideas corresponding to them, thereby probably meaning that they do so by acting on the inner sense.² But at another time he says that we, 'being conscious of' and 'observing' the operations of the mind, 'do receive from them' certain ideas.³ The exact meaning of this statement is, however, more difficult to find out than that of the former. For it may mean either that our consciousness of the operations of the mind consists in our receiving ideas of them in virtue of inner sense, in which case the doctrine of inner sense retains its force, or—and this seems to be the more probable meaning—that we are somehow conscious of the operations of the mind *prior* to our receiving ideas from them, in which case the doctrine of inner sense would be altogether superfluous.

Locke's doctrine of inner sense is, however, open to a more fundamental difficulty arising out of an inevitable consequence of the empirical standpoint advocated by him, viz., that our empirical knowledge is confined to our ideas. Inner sense, according to Locke, being that which is affected by the activities of the independently existing mind, we can speak of the former only in so far as we can speak of the latter at the same time. But since the view that our empirical knowledge is confined to ideas, the view to which Locke is committed, precludes us from making any reference to the latter, there can be no sense in our speaking of the former. For the same reason, it is needless to mention, it would be idle to talk of outer sense also. Moreover, in order that the inner sense can be admitted in distinction from the outer sense, it is necessary that the ideas arising from the affection of the inner sense—that is, ideas corresponding to the self—be distinguishable from those

¹ Locke, *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II, i, 3.

² In these statements Locke makes no mention of inner sense or of its affection by the operations of the mind, but substitutes for inner sense vague expressions such as 'reflection', 'observation', etc., and speaks of our reflecting on, considering, or observing the operations of the mind, instead of our inner sense being affected by them. This shows that Locke finds it extremely difficult to make a clear statement of the view which he seems to uphold, viz., that the self, unlike other things, possesses the unique capacity of acting upon or turning back upon itself.

³ Cf. Locke, *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II, i, 4.

which arise from the affection of the outer sense, that is, those which correspond to external objects. But this also cannot be possible owing to our supposed incapacity for going beyond our ideas and, consequently, our having no means of dividing our ideas into two separate groups in the manner which is in demand.

The fact, however, is that the very idea that the self can affect itself in any manner whatsoever carries with it an absurdity. For the very possibility of a thing's being affected necessarily presupposes that that by which it is to be affected is not itself but something other than itself. The reason why, then, Locke thought it necessary to admit the self's affection by itself is to be found in his acceptance of the erroneous view handed down by tradition, viz., that knowledge, self-knowledge not excepted, must be explained with reference to the principle of causality. But in this Locke failed to realize that knowledge interpreted in the light of the principle of causality must be held to be concerned merely with the effect of a cause, whether an external object or the self, with the result that we would have no means of knowing that that which we are concerned with in knowledge is such an effect or that the effect is at all due to a cause.

It should be borne in mind that Kant excluded the question of the action of body upon mind from his consideration of our knowledge of the external world. In consequence, he declared that the question how outer intuitions arise in the subject is unanswerable. In this he seems to have freed knowledge from the operation of the principle of mechanical causation. But he did not succeed in avoiding altogether his predecessors' error and, in fact, revived it in a different form by holding that knowledge involves some kind of action on the self by something outside of the self or by the self itself according as knowledge relates to the external world or to the self, and that this action is transcendental, not mechanical. This is the reason why he insisted on the necessity of the affection of the self by the self itself or rather its activities through the medium of inner sense, with regard to the possibility of self-knowledge, although when he came to realize the difficulty of explaining the possibility of outer intuitions, he must have felt that it is all the more difficult to explain how inner intuitions arise in the mind.

At one time Kant seems to have thought that the difficulty with regard to the possibility of inner intuitions might be avoided if inner

sense were understood with reference to some sense-organ granted to be the organ of inner sense, although he was precluded from such understanding by the standpoint of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. But finding that there is no bodily sense-organ which he could regard as the special organ of inner sense, he declared that 'one might say the soul is the organ of inner sense'.¹ By this he probably meant that just as the self is affected by the thing-in-itself in virtue of outer sense, so it can be said to be affected in virtue of itself, being treated as the organ of inner sense. But apart from the crudity of the conception of the soul as the organ of inner sense, Kant's present consideration does not take him further than his previous admission of the difficulty in as much as it amounts to a mere restatement of the original proposition.

In the Transcendental Deduction in the Second Edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant made another attempt to explain the possibility of the self's being affected by itself. His procedure here, though not very obscure, is yet lacking in logical consecutiveness. His argument may, however, be restated as follows. Understanding is the faculty of pure activity, while sensibility is that of pure passivity. That being so, the former cannot receive intuitions within itself, even if they be given in the latter. In other words, the former by its very nature cannot act upon the latter. But since the faculty of transcendental imagination, as Kant holds, is at once the faculty of activity as well as of passivity, understanding 'under the title of a transcendental synthesis of imagination performs this act upon the passive subject whose faculty it is, and we are, therefore, justified in saying that inner sense is affected thereby'.² The real sense of this argument is that one and the same self viewed as the understanding is the self that acts, and viewed as sensibility is the self that is acted upon; and that the difficulty in regard to the possibility of the purely active self's acting upon the purely passive self is avoided by means of the view of the same self as a third faculty, viz., imagination, which is at once both active and passive.

But quite evidently Kant here seeks to resolve the difficulty with regard to the possibility of the self's being affected by itself by means of understanding the self in terms of faculties—a difficulty which could not be removed so long as he understood the self in the strict critical

¹ Kant, *Anthropologie*, Werke, VII, 22, p. 474.

² *Critique of Pure Reason*, B, pp. 153-4.

sense as the subject and not in the ontological sense as a group or bundle of faculties. He himself seems to have realized that this explanation of the difficulty was not in strict accord with his critical standpoint, and shortly after offering it, he declared that the difficulty remained where it was. 'How the I that thinks can', he says, 'be distinct from the I that intuits itself (for I can represent still other modes of intuition as at least possible), and yet, as being the same subject, can be identical with the latter; and how, therefore, I can say: I, as intelligence and thinking subject, know myself as an object that is thought, in so far as I am likewise given to myself in intuition, but know myself, like other phenomena, only as I appear to myself, not as I am to the understanding—these are questions that raise no greater nor less difficulty than how I can be an object to myself at all and, more particularly, an object of intuition and of inner perceptions.'¹ Quite curiously, however, he asserts immediately afterwards² that the self's intuiting, or being affected by, itself is an undeniable fact, and puts forward an analogical argument in support of this assertion, which may be stated as follows.

Representations of time which are distinct from outer representations cannot be representations for us except in so far as they come to us as the 'image of a line' or as a 'single dimension', just as outer representations are not represented to us except in so far as they come to us in spatial dimensions. This presupposes that we 'arrange' the determinations of inner sense in time in precisely the same manner in which we arrange those of outer sense in space.³ This parallelism between inner and outer sense being granted, we can base another parallelism upon it, and say that just as 'we know objects only in so far as we are externally affected', so we intuit ourselves by means of inner sense only in so far as 'we are inwardly affected by ourselves!'⁴ Now, as regards this argument, it involves two things which may for the time being be left out of account, viz., Kant's view of space as the form of outer sense and of time as the form of inner sense, and his consideration that outer and inner intuitions are distinct from, and parallel to, each other. What is necessary to observe here is that Kant's present argument is a glaring example of circular reasoning. It is by already granting that the self is affected by itself as well as by the thing-in-itself that Kant first speaks of the parallelism between inner and outer intuitions and between their

¹ *Ibid.*, B, p. 155.

² *Ibid.*, B, p. 156.

³ *Ibid.*, B, p. 156.

⁴ *Ibid.*, B, p. 156.

forms, time and space, and then from this twofold parallelism he infers the parallelism which he has already granted, viz., that the self is inwardly affected by itself and outwardly by things-in-themselves.

We may next deal with another argument¹ for the necessity of the self's being affected by itself, which, like the above, was based by Kant on the consideration that inner representations cannot come to us except in so far as they are arranged in time. But, unlike the above, it is not analogical, nor does it make any reference to the parallelism between inner and outer representations. On the contrary, Kant opens it with the view that the 'representations of the outer senses constitute the proper material with which we occupy our mind'. He then states that outer representations as given in space must be further arranged in time, and that time as a form being nothing but the 'mode in which the mind is affected through its own activity (namely, through this positing of its representation)', the fact of the self's arranging representations in time is the same as the fact of its being affected by itself. Now, as regards this argument, it is hardly necessary to point out that it amounts to nothing but the mere statement that the self affects itself and leaves Kant's difficulty where it was. But what is still worse is that it creates a fresh difficulty. Since space is as much a form of representations as time, the latter can no more than the former be said to 'represent anything save in so far as something is posited in the mind'. If then, time, on this ground, be regarded as a mode in which the mind is affected through its own activity, why should not, on the same ground, space also be regarded as such a mode?

Kant, however, was not himself satisfied by his procedure so far, and finally, by appealing to the fact of attention, stated as follows: 'I do not see why so much difficulty should be found in admitting that our inner sense is affected by ourselves. Such affection finds exemplification in each and every act of attention. In every act of attention the understanding determines inner sense, in accordance with the combination which it thinks, to that inner intuition which corresponds to the manifold in the synthesis of the understanding. How much the mind is usually thereby affected, everyone will be able to perceive in himself.'² Here attention, which, in Kant's view, exemplifies the fact of the self's being affected by itself, is obviously held to consist in the action of the faculty of the understanding on sensibility. So Kant does not throw

¹ *Critique of Pure Reason*, B, pp. 67-8.

² *Ibid.*, B, pp. 156-7, n. 1.

any new light on the point under discussion, but really goes back to one of the positions which we have already discussed. The last sentence in this extract, however, brings to light the real crux of the situation. In stating 'how much the mind is usually thereby affected, everyone will be able to perceive in himself', Kant seems to mean that just as in the case of sensing we are aware that we are affected by something outside us, and receive sensations or, to use Kant's own expression, outer intuitions, so in the case of attending we are aware that we affect ourselves and thereby produce inner intuitions in us. The view of attention put forward here, though not identical with, yet involves, the doctrine of innervation against which Hume and later William James fought very strongly. According to the advocates of the doctrine of innervation, self-activity involves the peculiar feeling, on the part of the self, of putting forth energy from within itself, but not the production of any sensation or 'intuition' within it. Kant, on the other hand, holds here that self-activity or the self's putting forth effort operates on the passive self and thereby produces inner intuitions. Nevertheless, he agrees with the former in holding that attention involves self-activity or the self's putting forth energy from within itself. It is against this view¹ that Hume and William James objected, and they urged that the so-called self-activity, which is ordinarily held to be involved in attention or in any form of conation, is a pure figment, and that there is no sense in saying that we act within ourselves. Kant also ought to have taken this line, not because of the reasons of Hume and James, but because the transcendental self being, in his view, a bare identity, the conception of it as both active and passive, which is demanded by the possibility of the self's being affected by itself, is not tenable.

We have yet to mention the most fundamental objection against Kant's distinction between inner and outer sense, which is similar to that which we have already urged against Locke's position on the same point. Since we are, according to Kant, precluded from knowing the thing in itself as well as the self in itself, we have 'no means of determining whether any affection produced in us is produced by ourselves rather than by the thing in itself; consequently, we could never say that a given affection was an appearance due to ourselves, and, therefore, to inner sense'.¹ The subject, in Kant's view, being a bare identity and having no manifold within it, all kinds of intuitions, which it is said to

¹ H. A. Prichard, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, p. 109.

receive, may rather be held to be due to external affection, that is, to outer sense, and we may not, therefore, be able to admit an inner sense at all.

Kant is thus left with his original difficulty. His only reason for admitting the doctrine of inner sense was perhaps that he could use this doctrine as a means of avoiding the Leibnizian doctrine of apperception which stood in the way of the fulfilment of the fundamental object of his philosophical enquiry, viz., to show that ultimate reality is inaccessible to knowledge. Leibniz's doctrine of apperception being granted, we can be said to know at least the self as it is in itself. And this would take away one-half of the plausibility of Kant's belief that the real nature of things is hidden from our knowledge.

C. Kant's Treatment of the Parallelism between Space and Time as a New Point in the Parallelism between Inner Sense and Outer Sense

Here we have to consider a point which is peculiar to Kant's view of the parallelism between outer and inner sense and has no concern with Locke's view of the same. In the Transcendental Aesthetic Kant seeks to show that time is not a feature of things-in-themselves, but a form of our perception. The arguments which he puts forward in showing this are, *mutatis mutandis*, identical with those which he employs in proving that space does not belong to things-in-themselves, but is a form under which we perceive physical things or, in other words, receive outer representations. His argument in his treatment of space and time being thus parallel, it is natural to expect that he should regard space and time as alike forms of our perception of external objects, that is, forms of outer sense. But, contrary to expectation, Kant holds that space is the form of our intuition of physical things, while time is the form under which we intuit ourselves, and thereby secures a new point in the parallelism between inner and outer sense.

For our immediate purpose it is not necessary to enquire whether Kant has been able to prove that space and time are a priori and not derivable from experience. Let us, on the contrary, concede that he has succeeded in proving this, and try merely to determine how far his new point in the parallelism between inner and outer sense holds good. To this end it is necessary to consider Kant's special reason, which is, in fact, the only reason he has advanced, for regarding time as the form of inner sense. 'Time is', Kant says, 'nothing but the form of inner

sense, that is, of the intuition of ourselves and of our inner states. It cannot be a determination of outer appearances; it has to do neither with shape nor position, but with the relation of representations in our inner state.¹

To follow the above argument it is first necessary to understand Kant's meaning of the expression 'outer appearance'. By it he certainly does not mean outer intuitions or sensations. For sensations as such having, according to him, neither spatial nor temporal determinations, he cannot, as he does here, attribute to them the determinations of shape and position nor deny them those of time. What he, then, means by it are objects in space or at least sensations as held in the form of outer sense. That being so, by stating that time is not the determination of objects in space he must be implying that it is the determination of inner intuitions as held in the form of inner sense. That this is Kant's real meaning is evident from his own statement that time has only to do 'with the relation of representations in our inner state'.

Kant's meaning of 'outer appearances' being thus settled, we can easily say that his argument here does not prove, though he thinks it does, but merely assumes or asserts, that time is the form of inner sense. This argument being the only one which Kant has put forward on this point, it may be said that he has never proved time to be the form of inner sense. In fact, Kant not only did not, but also could not, prove that time is exclusively the form of inner sense. All intuitions, the so-called outer as well as the so-called inner, according to him, are alike mental or, as he himself says, 'determinations of the mind', and hence must be said to 'belong to our inner state'.² That being so, time, which, in Kant's present view, is the form of our intuition of inner states, is alike the form of our intuition of the so-called outer and inner representations. And Kant himself means this when he says 'time is the formal a priori condition of all appearances whatsoever'.³

The view of time as the condition of our intuition of all representations, the so-called inner as well as the so-called outer, not only does not admit of the recognition of time as the exclusive form of inner sense, but also gives rise to the difficulty as to how the so-called outer intuitions can be said to be received in space regarded as the form of outer sense. Kant says that time is the 'mediate condition of outer

¹ *Critique of Pure Reason*, A, p. 33; B, pp. 49-50.

² *Ibid.*, A, p. 34; B, p. 50.

³ *Ibid.*, A, p. 34; B, p. 50.

appearances',¹ and thereby implies that space is the immediate condition of these appearances. But this cannot be justified. For outer representations, being mental, that is, determinations of the mind, must be held to be immediately conditioned by time. Strictly speaking, Kant, who agrees with sensationalism in holding that the ultimate data of all our knowledge are mental states, must also agree with the latter in holding that time is prior to space, and that space is somehow derivable from time. It is not, however, suggested that in regarding time as prior to space Kant should have subscribed to the sensationalist view of space and time as empirical. He could very well retain his own conception of space and time as a priori and yet hold that time is prior to space. And as a matter of fact, his standpoint in the Transcendental Deduction seems to imply this view.

If, then, Kant's real position on the point under discussion is that time is not exclusively concerned with inner representations nor is the form of inner sense as opposed to that of outer sense, he cannot admit the doctrine of inner sense on the ground of the parallelism of space and time regarded as the forms of outer and inner sense respectively. Kant's main difficulty with regard to this point is, however, this. He introduced undue complications into the whole question of our knowledge by admitting, no matter what his reasons were for doing so, the necessity of *forms* with regard to the possibility of knowledge. Having once made this admission and having at the same time held that our knowledge of ourselves is co-ordinate with, and parallel to, our knowledge of the external world, he found it equally necessary to point to the respective forms of our knowledge of ourselves and of the external world. Now, the external world being unquestionably spatio-temporal, he could not in the long run avoid, and actually did not, recognizing both time and space as the forms of our knowledge of the external world. The result was that there was nothing left for him, which he could regard, as he was required to do, as the exclusive form of our knowledge of ourselves. A dilemma was, therefore, inevitable. If self-knowledge as a separate form of knowledge, parallel to knowledge of the external world, must be recognized, then the very idea of under-

¹ *Critique of Pure Reason*, A, 34; B, p. 50. By 'outer appearances' Kant here means outer intuitions and not objects in space nor outer intuitions as held in space. For, if either of the latter had been his meaning, he would have called space their determination and not condition as he has actually called it here.

standing the possibility of knowledge with reference to *forms*, at least those which Kant admits, must be abandoned. Hence the advantage which Locke had over Kant in not having brought in the question of the *form* of our knowledge. If, however, the necessity of *forms* with regard to the possibility of knowledge be insisted on, then self-knowledge as a separate and distinct form of knowledge, parallel to knowledge of the external world, cannot be recognized. So far as Kant himself is concerned, he also should not have recognized it, but should rather have denied its possibility not merely because he has not shown self-knowledge to have a *form* which is exclusively its own, but because the self, which, according to him, is the knower or the subject in all knowledge, cannot, like outer things, be itself an object of knowledge.

D. What are the 'Ideas of Reflection' or 'Intuitions' of Inner Sense?

In order that inner sense may be, as both Locke and Kant want it to be, parallel to outer sense, the former must be able to show what those 'ideas of reflection' are which lead to the apprehension of the self, just as 'sensations' received by outer sense lead to the apprehension of physical things. Similarly it is expected of Kant to show what those inner 'intuitions' are which, when received by inner sense and held in time or temporal relations, yield the apprehension of the self, just as outer 'intuitions', when received by outer sense and held in spatial and temporal relations, lead to the apprehension of physical things. The question which is required to be answered on this point may precisely be stated thus: what are all the 'ideas of reflection' or 'intuitions' of inner sense, and which of them can be said to constitute the self as known, that is, the empirical self? We may first take up this question so far as it concerns Kant, and shall later on show that it is far less complicated and admits of a much simpler answer in the case of Locke than in the case of Kant.

It is, however, unfortunate that Kant does not enumerate the inner intuitions in the Transcendental Aesthetic where he is expected to do that. There he merely states that the intuitions of inner sense are the intuitions of 'ourselves' and of our inner states.¹ But this not only does not tell us what the intuitions of ourselves are, but makes us wonder what Kant means by distinguishing the intuitions of ourselves from those of our inner states. His meaning may, however, be brought out

¹ Ibid., A, p. 33; B, p. 49.

thus. Since, according to Kant, all intuitions, the so-called outer as well as the so-called inner, are alike intuitions of our inner states, they are all alike the contents of inner sense. But that does not mean, nor does Kant himself mean, that all our inner intuitions are the intuitions of, or constitute, ourselves. On the contrary, of the inner intuitions, as Kant seems to hold, only some and not all are the intuitions of the self as known, or are the proper stuff of the empirical self. However that may be, for our immediate purpose it is necessary to have Kant's complete enumeration of the inner intuitions and to determine therefrom which of them can be said to be the intuitions of ourselves in particular. For this we are referred to his *Anthropologie*, where he enumerates all that we nowadays call mental states and processes. In this treatise Kant follows the tripartite division of consciousness and distinguishes, on the one hand, two kinds of purely subjective or non-cognitive processes, viz., the affective such as feelings, and the conative like desires, volitions, etc., and, on the other, the cognitive processes having reference to the external world such as sensations, perceptions, etc. The question now is whether any or all of these contents of inner sense may be said to be the stuff of the empirical self.

The claim of the so-called subjective states to be regarded as the constituents of the empirical self is obviously greater than that of other mental states and processes. But in order that he may admit this position Kant must hold that inner sense, in so far as it is concerned with the so-called subjective states and processes, is a faculty of knowing or cognizing. Curiously, however, he holds the opposite view. In the *Anthropologie*, where Kant uses the term 'inner sense' in the plural, he, of course, states that there are certain inner senses which are concerned with feelings, desires, etc., but holds that these inner senses have nothing in common with senses at all.¹ And he goes further in the *Critique of Pure Reason* in stating that feelings, desires, etc., having nothing to do with knowledge, the inner sense, which is the condition of our knowledge of ourselves, has no concern with them.² His position becomes clearer when he says that 'the representations of the outer senses constitute the proper material with which we occupy our mind'.³ Again, while meeting the charge of subjective idealism levelled against him,

¹ Cf. *Anthropologie*, Section 22; also James Ward, *A Study of Kant*, p. 143.

² *Critique of Pure Reason*, B, p. 66.

³ *Ibid.*, B, p. 67.

Kant observes that it is from things outside us that 'we derive the whole material of knowledge, even for our inner sense'.¹ All this goes to show that the one inner sense, which, according to Kant, is concerned with our knowledge of the self, and which must be distinguished from the so-called inner senses, is concerned, indeed surprisingly, with those intuitions which are already given in the outer sense. It, therefore, follows that the so-called subjective states, not being given in outer sense, cannot be the intuitions of the one inner sense, and, consequently, cannot constitute the empirical self.

Should we, then, say that the remaining inner intuitions, viz., the cognitive, which Kant calls 'the whole material of our knowledge', are, in his view, the constituents of the self as known? In dealing with this question we must bear in mind that in the First Edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant, in spite of holding that all intuitions are equally determinations of the mind, regarded the intuitions of ourselves as distinct from those of physical things, as is evident from the distinction which he, as seen above, drew between the intuitions of ourselves and of our inner states. It is only in the Second Edition of his first *Critique* that he altogether obliterated this distinction by holding that 'the representations of the outer sense constitute the proper material with which we occupy our mind'. He perhaps held this view on the understanding that it could enable him to show that self-consciousness is determined by objective consciousness and to refute thereby any charge of subjective idealism that might be made against him. In point of fact, Kant himself thought that his refutation of idealism primarily consisted in proving that 'inner experience in general is possible only through outer experience in general'.²

Now, according to Kant's new standpoint in the Second Edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, 'the representations of outer sense are all by their very nature likewise representations of inner sense. To outer sense are due both their content and their spatial form; to inner sense they owe only the additional form of time; their content remains unaffected in the process of being taken over by a second sense'.³ That being so, the empirical self should be said to be constituted by outer intuitions held in temporal relations and to agree with physical objects

¹ Ibid., B, p. xxxix.

² Ibid., B, pp. 278-9.

³ N. K. Smith, *A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 294.

in quality, while differing only in form. Thus the self as known to us should, in Kant's view, have such qualities as colour, smell, etc. This position, it is needless to point out, is as crude as absurd. Moreover, there would arise another difficulty. Since, as previously seen, Kant holds that time is the form of all appearances, physical objects, in his view, should also be constituted by outer intuitions held in temporal as well as spatial relations. It would, therefore, follow that the empirical self and physical things as known cannot differ in form either. Kant could, of course, reply that the empirical self has only temporal determinations, while physical things as known have both spatial and temporal ones. But even then, the difficulty would arise as to why in the case of our intuition of the self the outer intuitions which are already in spatial relations must lose these relations in the process of being taken over by inner sense, whereas in the case of our intuition of physical things they must not.

The question to which Kant is thus unable to offer a satisfactory answer is, however, one which Locke can answer without any of the difficulties which, as seen above, Kant has to face. Locke distinguished between *acts* of consciousness and *contents* of consciousness, and held that just as external objects affect our outer sense and thereby produce sensations, so our mental acts like sensing, perceiving, etc. affect our inner sense and thereby produce 'ideas' corresponding to them. Mental acts being distinct from their contents, the 'ideas' corresponding to the former are clearly distinguishable from the latter, which are sensations or 'ideas' of outer sense, so that Locke finds himself in a position to state that the former ideas are the constituents of the empirical self just as the latter are of the physical things as known to us. Locke thus secures a point in the strict parallelism between inner and outer sense.

We should not, however, lose sight of the fact that, like Locke, Kant also distinguished between acts and contents of consciousness. But the acts of consciousness which Kant called the transcendental faculties, viz., Sensibility, Imagination and Understanding, must, according to him, be included among the conditions of knowledge, which cannot themselves be objects of knowledge. Kant was, therefore, precluded from admitting what Locke could easily do, viz., intuitions specially belonging to inner sense, with the result that he failed to secure the point in the parallelism between inner and outer sense which was within the easy reach of Locke.

Conclusion

Among the philosophers in the West, Kant was perhaps the first to have made a serious enquiry, in fact, the most serious enquiry ever made, into the problem of our knowledge of the self, one of the outstanding results of which was his doctrine of inner sense. To him also belongs the credit of having shown for the first time that this problem is immensely complex, involving several issues, which are not all without difficulty. This is the reason for our having taken up Kant's version of the doctrine of inner sense for special study.

As the foregoing discussion has shown, Kant did not succeed any more than Locke in establishing the doctrine of inner sense, despite the rare philosophical insight which he brought to bear upon his understanding of the nature of self-knowledge. This is due to the fact that this doctrine is based on the absurd presupposition that our knowledge of the self takes place indirectly and mediately through the intermediary of the 'ideas' or 'intuitions' of our mental acts. As one of our main theses in these essays goes, even our knowledge of external objects is direct and immediate, notwithstanding the fact that they are *externally* related to ourselves as knowers, and that there is a formidable array of both a priori and empirical considerations to contradict the directness and immediacy of this kind of knowledge. That being so, our knowledge of our self, in which the knower and the object known are *internally* related, cannot be regarded as indirect and mediate except by means of the most arbitrary extension, in its case, of the scope of a theory of knowledge which assumes without question that knowledge as such is mediate and indirect. This is perhaps the reason which those philosophers have in view who hold that, no matter how the nature of our knowledge of the external world be understood, our knowledge of our self must be said to take place directly and immediately and not through an intermediary, viz., 'intuitions' or 'ideas' of our mental acts.

But, then, the position last mentioned is also not free from difficulty. The self as knower and the self as known being, ultimately, one and the same—and there being, according to this position, no 'ideas' or 'intuitions' and, in fact, nothing which could be said to be distinct from the self, and through the intermediary of which the self could be presented to itself as an object—there would really be no object to be known in the case of self-knowledge regarded as direct and immediate.

This is precisely the difficulty which the advocates of the doctrine of inner sense want to avoid by insisting on the necessity of 'ideas' or 'intuitions' of mental acts with regard to the possibility of self-knowledge. A similar difficulty would not, however, arise in the case of our knowledge of the external world regarded as direct and immediate, because the object of this knowledge is obviously distinct from the self or the knower.

The inevitable dilemma in which the problem of self-knowledge is found to be involved can, however, be solved in one way, and one way only. And the way in question would consist in holding that knowledge is, on the one hand, direct and immediate, and, on the other, has for its object something which is numerically distinct from the self or the knower; and, consequently, that we can know our self neither directly and immediately nor indirectly and mediately through 'intuitions' or 'ideas' resulting from the affection of our inner sense by our mental acts. In other words, the solution of the dilemma is to be found in the liquidation of the problem of self-knowledge.

V

SENSE-DATA, PERCEPTION AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE

I

INTRODUCTION

OF the problems that have figured prominently in the recent realistic schools of philosophy, one relates to the nature of knowledge. This problem, as a review of the history of philosophy will show, is apt to be variously complicated. But if the various complications which it has actually come to acquire in course of time be examined in the light of impartial judgment, it will be found that most of them are as unnecessary as difficult of solution. The realists of recent times, however, instead of divesting this problem of unnecessary complications, have accepted it with most of the difficult issues which tradition has imposed upon it.

It is by adhering to tradition that most of the recent realists, while understanding knowledge in its usual sense as perceptual knowledge or knowledge of the external world, have further held that it includes inner apprehension or the self's knowledge of itself. They have thus come to regard the problem of knowledge not as simple and single but as complex and twofold, relating respectively to perceptual knowledge and self-knowledge. Accepting this complication as a basis, they have, as we shall see below, added further complications to the problem of knowledge.

The additional complications, in fact, are those that are intimately related to the distinction between the so-called act of knowing and the immediate content of knowledge, between knowing regarded as a mental process and the immediate data of sense. As regards this distinction, however, some of the recent realists, like some of the earlier

philosophers such as Descartes and Leibniz, hold that it is inapplicable in the case of self-knowledge where the knower and the object known are numerically one and the same. But some others among them, like some of their predecessors in the earlier history of philosophy such as Locke and Kant, have been unwilling to free the question of self-knowledge from the present complication, and have held that self-knowledge would not have the strict sense of knowledge except in so far as the distinction between act and immediate content holds good in its case just as it does in the case of our knowledge of the external world. Accordingly, they have, like Locke and Kant, placed self-knowledge and perceptual knowledge on an equal footing by admitting the data of inner sense, that is, introspective data regarded as parallel to, and co-ordinate with, the data of outer sense.

While philosophers, including the recent realists, are thus divided in their opinion with regard to the applicability of the distinction between act and immediate content in the case of self-knowledge, they generally understand our knowledge of the external world in terms of this distinction. What exactly the immediate data are in the case of perceptual knowledge is, however, a question which the recent realists have found not so easy to answer as it is in the hands of the plain man. The plain man's simple answer is that the immediate data in the case of our perceptual knowledge are nothing but independently existing physical things themselves. But the recent realists, like many earlier philosophers, have found reasons, both a priori and empirical, for arguing that the immediate contents of our sense-experience cannot be physical things themselves but must be something else. This, it is needless to point out, has produced an unnecessary complication in the problem of our knowledge of the external world.

As regards the question, what this 'something else' is, the answer, which has prevailed for a long time since the beginning of the modern history of Western philosophy, is that it is mental, being constituted by 'ideas' or sensations. But once 'ideas' came to be recognized as the immediate data in the case of our knowledge of the physical world, the difficult problem arose as to how we could at all know independently existing physical things from the ideas which are absolutely disparate from them. In spite of this difficulty, which is really beyond solution, many philosophers in the past, and some in recent times, among whom a few realists may be counted, persisted in admitting ideas as the

immediate data in the case of perceptual knowledge, while holding curiously enough that things perceived are physical, not mental.

It is of interest to remember that Arnauld, a contemporary of Descartes, and Reid, a contemporary of Kant, on the one hand, and Berkeley on the other, came to realize that one cannot admit 'ideas' as the immediate contents of sense and at the same time hold that things perceived are independently existing physical things. The former got rid of this difficulty by dismissing such things as 'ideas' and reaffirming the common-sense view that what is directly and immediately given in our perceptual knowledge is an independently existing physical thing or things and nothing else. Berkeley, on the other hand, solved the same difficulty by denying that there are such things as independently existing physical things and holding that things perceived are solely constituted by the immediate contents of our perception, which, according to him, are 'ideas'.

In holding the view that it is independently existing physical things that are directly and immediately given in our perceptual knowledge, Arnauld and Reid, however, seem to have based themselves merely on an immediate deliverance of common experience, unconscious of the difficulties to which this view might be held to be open. This is perhaps the reason why their protest against the theory of 'ideas' produced little effect in the philosophical world, with the result that even till this day philosophers do not find it unreasonable to hold that what is immediately given in perceptual knowledge is something else than independently existing physical things themselves.

Nevertheless, Berkeley's excessive fondness for the theory of 'ideas', resulting in his dismissal of the reality of independently existing physical things, led quite a number of realistically inclined philosophers in recent times to react strongly against this theory. They seem to have felt the same difficulty with regard to the theory of 'ideas' which had earlier been felt by Arnauld and Reid. But while the latter solved that difficulty by making no room for any intermediary between mind and independently existing physical things with regard to the possibility of perceptual knowledge, most of the realists of recent times have felt it necessary to admit such an intermediary, but have held that the difficulty in question would disappear if the intermediary, viz., the immediate data of sense, as distinguished from physical things themselves, were held to be non-mental.

Although Berkeley was not alone in holding the view that the immediate contents of sense are 'ideas', it is he who insisted on the all-importance of ideas with regard to the possibility of perceptual knowledge, by advocating the doctrine known as subjective idealism. It is on this account that the recent realists started with a revolt against subjective idealism. What they wished to show as against subjective idealism is that that which is immediately given in perceptual knowledge, though not an independently existing physical thing itself, is not 'ideas' either, that is, is not mental, but is non-mental or independent of mind, in what specific sense it is so being, however, a question which, as we shall see later, has been answered differently by the different groups into which these philosophers are divided. The main positive result emerging from the recent realistic discussions is, however, the substitution of a new doctrine of the immediate data of sense for the older theory of 'ideas' with reference to which the older representationists like Descartes and Locke understood the nature of perceptual knowledge. Thus have the recent realists revived an old complication of the problem of perceptual knowledge in a new form, instead of caring to enquire whether it is at all necessary. However that may be, the question arises whether they have really succeeded in refuting subjective idealism and in establishing their new doctrine of sense-data, and whether this doctrine has any real advantage over the theory of ideas in the treatment of the problem of perceptual knowledge. It is these questions that we wish to discuss in the section which immediately follows.

II

REFUTATION OF IDEALISM AND THE NEW DOCTRINE OF SENSE-DATA

Moore's Refutation of Idealism

In his essay on 'Refutation of Idealism', Moore observes that idealism is based on the assumption that perceiving and the immediate data of perception are analytically related, while the truth is that their relation is synthetic, which means that they are separate from, and independent of, each other. His main point, therefore, is that it is from this erroneous assumption that idealism has deduced its thesis that the object of per-

ceptual knowledge is mental or mind-dependent. But, apart from the question whether idealism really involves the assumption which Moore ascribes to it, there seems to be no justification for his expectation that the view of the relation between perceiving and the immediate data of perception as synthetic would necessarily go to show that the latter are physical or even non-mental. For, even if it be granted that the immediate data of perception are synthetically related to, and hence are independent of, perceiving, they may still be as mental as the latter, just as two physical things synthetically related to each other are equally physical, or two minds related to each other in the same manner are equally mental. In this connection it is of interest to note that some of the recent realists like Stout, who are no less opposed to idealism than Moore and his followers, have not found it necessary to regard the immediate data of perception as physical or even as non-mental, but have, on the contrary, retained the old view of them as mental.

The fact, however, is that the idealistic thesis in question seems to be based upon an assumption which is more fundamental than that which Moore understands it to be—the assumption which constitutes the very essence of the metaphysical theory known as spiritualism, viz., that the universe as a whole, including the physical world, is ultimately spiritual or of the nature of mind. That being so, it is not possible to refute the idealistic thesis in the manner in which Moore has attempted to do. What would be necessary for this purpose is to refute spiritualism, which he has not undertaken to do.

Moore, however, discovered later that idealism derives its main thesis from the consideration of the relativity of the immediate data of sense. When, for example, I perceive a thing as red at one time or under one set of circumstances, and as grey at another time or under another set of circumstances, I cannot call either of the two colours unreal, but should regard both as real, in view of the fact that my perceptual experience in both cases is equally due to the stimulation of my eyes by something existing outside of me. That being so, I should hold either that one and the same independently existing physical thing is both red and grey or that the red and the grey colours are separately real as ideas or sensations in my mind. But since, as the idealist would argue, the acceptance of the former alternative would amount to the admission of a logical absurdity, the latter is unavoidable.

Let us analyse and try to understand more clearly the idealistic argument as stated above, which is, in fact, the chief target of the realists' attack. It involves the following steps: (i) the admission of the reality of all sense-contents; (ii) the denial of their 'independence'; (iii) the conception of them as mental. The last step, which, in fact, constitutes the conclusion of the argument, obviously follows from the first two taken together. For, in order that sense-contents may be held to be mental, they must be taken to be real and at the same time lacking in independence so as not to be independently or extra-mentally real. The first step does not, however, stand for anything peculiar to idealism. In fact, the recent realists are at one with idealism in the admission of the reality of all sense-contents. So the refutation of idealism, as the recent realists seem to have thought, would demand the disproof of the second step in the idealistic argument which denies the 'independence' of sense-contents. To this end what would be necessary is to show that there is no logical absurdity about the ascription of 'independence' to the conflicting sense-contents relating to one and the same thing viewed in different perspectives. This has been done, among others, by Bertrand Russell, one of the foremost collaborators of Moore in the recent realistic movement in philosophy.

Russell versus Idealism

There are, Russell at one time held, two distinct kinds of physical or rather spatial worlds, the 'private' and the 'common'. The former, according to him, consists of sense-data that are peculiar to individual percipients, and vary from one individual to another. So it is many and various. The latter, in his view, is 'constructed' out of sense-data thus regarded and yet sheds the relative character of the sense-data through the process of 'construction' so as to become common to all percipients and, in fact, is the world of physics.

This position of Russell involves two important points which call for serious attention. The first relates to his substitution of the new conception of physical things as logical 'constructs' for the traditional conception of them as material substances. On this point Russell is in agreement with Berkeley in as much as the latter also dismisses the substance-theory of the physical world and holds, like the former, that this world needs to be constructed out of the immediate contents of sense. The second point divides Russell from Berkeley. Whereas,

according to Berkeley, the sense-contents as well as the world constructed out of them are mental, in the view of Russell, the former are physical and the latter, on this very ground, should be likewise physical.

The question, however, arises whether, in view of the above, Russell may be said to have any real advantage over the advocates of the substance-theory of the physical world on the one hand, and over Berkeley on the other. Now, those who regard physical things as substances are generally those who regard the mind also as a substance and treat the two kinds of substance as mutually opposed. In consequence, they are really precluded from speaking of the production of sensations in the mind by physical things and so also from advocating the view which they generally do, viz., that the mind knows physical things through the intermediary of sensations. But even if this difficulty be ignored, a fresh difficulty would arise as to how sensations which belong to the mind and are themselves mental can at all represent physical things which are *ex hypothesi* utterly disparate from the mind and from whatever is mental. These, however, are difficulties from which Russell is immune in so far as he regards the immediate data of sense as physical, not mental, and holds that these are precisely the materials out of which the physical world is to be constructed. But even then, there is no denying the fact that, in the view of Russell, the immediate data of sense, though not mind-dependent, are physically, nay, also physiologically, determined and so are *contingent*. That being so, one wonders how by means of any logical device physical things *as they are in themselves* can be constructed out of sense-data. This, it is needless to point out, brings out whatever justification the substance-theory of the physical world may have in its insistence on the absolute independence and unconditionality of that world.

We may best judge the relative merit of Berkeley's and Russell's treatment of the problem of our knowledge of the external world by first taking into account the parallelism that is clearly noticeable between their conceptions of the relation between the immediate contents of sense and the common world of our day-to-day life or of physics. Berkeley referred the sense-contents to individual minds and the common world of us all to the divine mind. Similarly does Russell locate the former in 'private spaces' and the latter in the 'common space'. Again, Berkeley explained away rather than explained the

relation between the private and the common world by stating that the former is an ectype of which the latter is the prototype. Russell also does the same by holding that our private worlds are the materials of which the common world is the logical configuration. Thus both, like the ancients such as Plato and the modern philosophers such as Leibniz, are equally guilty of allowing a rift between the microcosm and the macrocosm, which does not admit of being closed up. Russell, therefore, cannot be said to have an advantage over Berkeley except in that his view of both the private and the common worlds as physical seems to be agreeable to common sense, whereas Berkeley's view of both of them as mental proves disagreeable to it.

Now arises the question whether Russell or any other realist of recent times has succeeded in establishing that the immediate data of sense, as distinguished from physical things themselves, are physical or even non-mental. Obviously, this cannot be done so long as Berkeley's view of the immediate contents of sense holds the field without being proved to be false. Even if it be granted that the recent realists' view of the immediate data of sense as non-mental is as free of the aforementioned logical absurdity¹ as Berkeley's mentalistic view of them, what would at the most be established is that the former is an alternative to the latter. But in that case the dispute between the realist and the idealist would obviously remain where it was. The fact, however, is that the realists of recent times have failed to show as against Berkeley that the immediate data of sense are physical or even non-mental. And the reason for their failure, as we shall see later, lies embedded in the doctrine of sense-data advocated by them—the doctrine that implies the distinction between things perceived and the immediate data of perceptual experience.

The Applicability of the Realistic Doctrine of Sense-data

As previously indicated, Berkeley used the consideration of the relativity of our sense-experience as one of the points in the argument for his view that the immediate contents of perception are not the so-called independently existing physical things, but 'ideas'. The recent realists have added erroneous perception to perceptual experience affected by relativity, and have taken the consideration of both to-

¹ *Vide ante*, p. 85.

gether as the basis for arguing similarly that the immediate contents of our perceptual experience are not physical things themselves, but bare sense-data out of which physical things are to be constructed. But the question arises whether their doctrine of sense-data enables them to account for erroneous perception and perceptual experience affected by relativity. It would also be necessary to enquire whether this doctrine, in any of the forms in which it has been advocated by them, can account for veridical perception or apprehension of things as they are in themselves.

Now, the recent realists, while agreeing among themselves that sense-data are non-mental, stand divided in their view regarding the specific sense in which they are so. Some hold that sense-data are physical; some assume quite a curious attitude towards their status by holding that they are subsistents or 'essences'; some uphold a neutralistic standpoint by declaring that they are neutral entities characterizable as neither physical nor mental. Among these philosophers are also to be counted a few who, as previously mentioned, hold that sense-data are mental, and yet are realistic enough to maintain that things perceived are non-mental or rather physical. Notwithstanding the fact that they thus differ among themselves, they are at one in holding the view that all sense-data are real, and that physical things themselves are to be constructed out of, or to be inferred or indirectly known from, sense-data. But it is here that the crux of the whole situation lies. This view being granted, it would obviously follow that we have no means of distinguishing between veridical and erroneous perception; because both these kinds of perceptual experience, according to it, equally contain sense-data regarded as real, and the objects of both are equally to be constructed, inferred or indirectly known from sense-data thus regarded. In consequence, it would be impossible for us to recognize the erroneous character of our erroneous perception. This shows how absurd and suicidal is the doctrine of sense-data.

It is, however, far from us to ignore the service which the recent realists have rendered to epistemology by emphasizing that in this branch of knowledge it is of utmost importance to consider the phenomena of erroneous perception and perceptual experience affected by relativity—the things that are invariably left out of account by the plain man's view of perceptual knowledge, and are not infrequently ignored by epistemological theories. Yet there is no getting away from

the fact that these philosophers have thrown the problem of our knowledge of the external world into a state of utter confusion by mixing up the question of veridical perception or rather perceptual knowledge proper with the question arising out of the phenomena of illusion, hallucination, etc., and by holding that the answer of the former is dependent upon that of the latter. None can deny that illusion, hallucination, etc., cannot reveal their erroneous character to us except in the light of our veridical perception. And this obviously implies that veridical perception needs to be accepted as a fact unaffected by the consideration of the phenomena of illusion, hallucination, etc. We have, however, indicated in our first two essays how the problem which arises in connection with these phenomena should be dealt with. Suffice it to point out here that for securing its solution we should not go so far as to admit such things as the sense-data, nor should we hold, as the recent realists do, that veridical and erroneous perceptions involve the so-called sense-data in the same sense and in the same manner, in order that the qualitative distinction between these two kinds of perceptual experience may not be obliterated, and, consequently, the problem in question may not be rendered altogether meaningless.

With regard to the second part of our enquiry, it is necessary to bear in mind that it is by means of the conception of sense-data as non-mental that the majority of the recent realists seek to establish the view that the objects of our perceptual knowledge are not mind-dependent, but independent existences—a view which was thrown overboard by idealism. But the Critical Realists like Durant Drake and his collaborators, who conceive of sense-data as *logical* entities or mere *subsistents*, should find it no less difficult to know the physical world from sense-data thus conceived than idealism would do to understand this world in terms of its theory of 'ideas'. As regards the American New Realists headed by Edwin Holt, their view of sense-data as neutral entities, entities neither physical nor mental, obviously aims at the replacement of the older conception of the distinction between mind and physical things as *substantival* by the new conception of it as *functional*. But even if we prefer the latter conception to the former on account of its novelty and certain obvious advantages, we find ourselves at a loss to understand how one collocation of certain neutral sense-data must function as a physical thing, and not as mind, while another collocation

of the same sense-data might, functionally, be a mind and not a physical thing. The realists such as Stout, who, like the old representationists, hold that sense-data are mental, should, however, find it all the more difficult to establish that things perceived are independently existing physical things. For, obviously, there is no road from sense-data regarded as mental to physical things that are non-mental. And, consequently, our perceptual knowledge, on this view, must be confined to our 'ideas', which means that for these philosophers there is no escape from idealism, the epistemological theory to which they are professedly opposed.

Of the realists of recent times, Moore, Russell and Alexander come nearest to realism in virtue of their view that sense-data, though not physical things themselves, are yet physical. Nevertheless, they too are strangers to the true spirit of realism, to which is essential the view that the immediate objects of our perceptual knowledge are independently existing physical things. The sense-data, notwithstanding the fact that they are, according to these philosophers, physical, are yet contingent, being physically and physiologically determined, so that things constructed out of them can by no magic shed the original contingency of their basic materials and, consequently, cannot answer to the independently existing physical things themselves. This is, however, a difficulty which is not peculiar to these philosophers, but is common to all the realists of recent times. In fact, the doctrine of sense-data, in the forms in which it has usually been advocated, is inseparable from the view of the object of perceptual knowledge as contingent and, as such, is opposed to the true spirit of realism. This clearly shows that the recent schools of realism, far from vindicating the independent reality of the physical world, have, curiously enough, ended in advocating the view of it as contingent, which is the most objectionable feature of the idealistic theory of the physical world. The task of the refutation of idealism thus remains unfulfilled, despite the fact that this theory has been subjected to the severest criticism by the realists of recent times.

Common Sense versus the Realistic Doctrine of Sense-data

Now, in being conscious of an external object, I am undoubtedly conscious of it as *given*, which means that a thing which was previously

outside of my consciousness has now been brought to my consciousness. Thus, as we have never been tired of insisting, the fact of the given-ness of the thing perceived, which is an immediate deliverance of experience, implies that the *immediate* object of perception is an independently existing physical thing. But is this position free from all dispute? Perhaps not. Yet this at least should be admitted, that any dispute about it, if based on a purely a priori ground such as is provided by the hypothesis of dualism of mind and matter, deserves to be ignored for the simple reason that that which is warranted by experience cannot be sacrificed for the sake of a preconceived theory. The dispute cannot, however, be easily set aside if it is based on an empirical consideration. So the question is whether there is any empirical fact or facts, the consideration of which is opposed to the common-sense view that the immediate objects of our perceptual knowledge are independently existing physical things. Berkeley answered this question in the affirmative by pointing, among other things, to the fact of the relativity of our sense-experience. The recent realists have admitted this fact in common with Berkeley and have added to it the phenomena of illusion, dream and hallucination. And on the basis of the consideration of this twofold fact they have held, as against common sense, that the immediate objects of our perceptual experience must be something else than the independently existing physical things, though this something else, according to them, is non-mental. But this way of the solution of the problem relating to erroneous perception and perceptual experience affected by relativity, as previously seen, is tantamount to the obliteration of the distinction between veridical and erroneous perception and, consequently, to the denial of that problem itself.

The way out of this difficulty of the recent realists, however, seems to be as follows. In the first place, we should admit that the immediate object of our perceptual experience, in so far as that experience is true—and, normally, it is so—is an independently existing physical thing. Secondly, as regards erroneous perception and perceptual experience affected by relativity, it should be held, for the reason we have explained in our essay on 'The Problem and Postulates of Epistemology', that their objects are mere appearances (not appearances of things), the origin of which is psychologically explicable, but the status of which is, metaphysically, indeterminate and indeterminable. The only thing that needs to be added is an explanation of why our perceptual experience

affected by relativity should be placed on the same footing as our erroneous perception. The required explanation is as follows.

The point now to be discussed is, in fact, the same as that which we had earlier to deal with, especially in our essay on 'Towards a Theory of Sense-perception', where our position was as follows. Perceptual experience affected by relativity should, from the point of view of cognitive value, though not from that of origin, be regarded as homogeneous with erroneous perception, and both should be regarded as equally falling in a class apart from veridical perception which, as perceptual judgment, remains uncontradicted and is thus established as true. In fact, the homogeneity of perceptual experience affected by relativity and erroneous perception is too obvious to be ignored. When one and the same thing is perceived as of different colours, say, red, grey, etc., under varying circumstances, all these colours cannot be said to belong to it. If the thing be coloured in itself, it must be said to possess only one of these colours, and the rest should be held to be as lacking in independent reality as the object of an erroneous perception. If, on the contrary, it be a fact that no colour, nay, no physical quality is independently real, then the view that independently existing physical things are 'constructions' made out of sense-data would be no less absurd than the view that we are advancing here, viz., that of two or more conflicting qualities with which a thing may present itself to us, only one is independently real and the rest are not. But if the fact be otherwise, as it is most likely to be, then our view, obviously, has a distinct advantage over that of the recent realists.

But the question remains: how are we to ascertain which of the conflicting qualities is independently real and which is not? At first sight this question indeed seems difficult to answer. But the difficulty is more theoretical than practical. In ordinary practice we are really not so undecided as to the real colour, shape, size, etc., of things as the question assumes us to be. If a thing seems to be of different colours or shapes when viewed in different perspectives, we can more or less easily disentangle the colour or shape that belongs to it from those which do not, and our finding generally suits our practical purpose. But it would be difficult, if not altogether impossible, to ascertain the real colour or shape of a thing, if that colour or shape needs, as, in the view of the recent realists, it must do, to be constructed, inferred or indirectly known from the conflicting colours or shapes which the

thing, viewed in different perspectives, would present to us. This difficulty is, however, one to which these philosophers have been driven by their causal view of perceptual experience coupled with their utter neglect of the distinction between veridical and erroneous perception.

The fact is that the admission of such things as the immediate objects of sense in distinction from physical things themselves, no matter whether the former are regarded as mental or non-mental, is the outcome of the consideration of perceptual experience from the point of view of its origin, which has somehow gained currency in psychology, but which is really irrelevant to epistemology. Strictly speaking, the distinction between true and false perception, which is undeniable, and the investigation of which is the main business of epistemology, is rendered meaningless by the genetic or causal view of perceptual experience. That being so, in the epistemological enquiry into sense-perception it is absolutely necessary not to admit such things as the immediate objects of sense in distinction from physical things themselves, but to start with the recognition of the distinction between true and false perception with a view to ascertaining the status of their respective objects. If anyone proceeds on this line and with this object in view, he will perhaps come to find, as we have done in our essay on 'The Problem and Postulates of Epistemology', that the immediate objects of true perception are independently existing physical things, whereas those of false perception are mere appearances whose metaphysical status does not admit of determination and so is indeterminate and indeterminable. This position, of course, marks a step ahead of common sense and seems foreign to it. But it is acceptable to common sense when it comes out of its crude form and becomes enlightened by the deeper consideration of the fallibility of perceptual experience.

Our main conclusions, then, are: (i) that the immediate objects of perceptual knowledge, as common sense holds, are independently existing physical things regarded as accomplished facts, and not, as many older philosophers including Berkeley on the one hand, and most of the recent realists on the other, hold, something else; (ii) that common sense thus supplies a basis for the argument that is needed for refuting the spiritualistic conception of the physical world involved in idealism as well as the view of this world as contingent which the recent realists share with idealism.

But our position cannot as yet be said to stand on an absolutely safe ground simply because we have so far left out of account the question of the nature of the phenomenon of perceiving. Maybe the above conclusions and the whole discussion on which they are based are incompatible with the nature of this phenomenon. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to enquire whether the common-sense view of the immediate object of perceptual knowledge fits in with the true nature of perceiving as such.

III

THE NATURE OF PERCEIVING

Traditional Ways of viewing Perceiving

One of the common characteristics of the traditional views of the nature of perceiving lies in their insistence on the conditionality of perceiving, though, as we shall see from the discussion that follows, the advocates of these views are not agreed as to the exact sense in which it is conditional. The sense which is more usual than any other is, however, the one that is conveyed by the ordinary view which holds that perceiving is mechanically determined by certain physical and physiological factors. When I perceive a thing, that thing, as the ordinary view goes, acts on some of my sense-organs; thereupon certain physiological processes take place in my nervous system including my brain; and lastly, this chain of mechanical processes somehow produces certain effects in my mind, of which I am said to be aware, and in my awareness of which my perception of the thing concerned is held to consist. Now, on this view, the immediate objects of perceiving should naturally bear the stamp of the conditionality of perceiving itself; and so they cannot be, as, according to common sense, they must be, independently existing physical things.

But the question arises whether this view of perceiving, which is undoubtedly scientific in outlook, can be accepted as finally valid in an epistemological theory. We can think of at least two reasons, one logical and the other empirical, which seem to contradict its validity. The former is as follows. We cannot admit, nor can even speak of, the conditionality of perceiving and that of the immediate object of perception consequent thereupon except in so far as we can somehow

know the various factors including the independently existing physical things by which perceiving is said to be determined. This obviously points to the necessity of the transcendence of the conditionality of perceiving and brings out the truth that perceiving is in a sense unconditional, and that the immediate object of perceptual knowledge is an unconditioned or independently existing physical thing.

What is thus established by a purely logical reasoning seems to be fully borne out by the consideration of an undeniable fact about perceptual knowledge, viz., the 'compresence' of the percipient and the thing perceived. In this connection it should, however, be observed that at least some, if not all, of the realists of recent times, unlike earlier philosophers, have taken special notice of the relation of 'compresence' in their theory of sense-perception. But the fact is that their biased judgment has prevented them from realizing the true meaning of this relation. The relation of 'compresence' is peculiar in that its terms, the perceiving mind and the thing perceived, notwithstanding the fact that they are mediated by space and time and several other factors like physical and physiological processes, occupy, as it were, a common point of space and a common moment of time. That being so, the realists of recent times, who advocate the doctrine of sense-data, are obviously precluded from the admission of this relation in its true sense, however they may emphasize its importance. From their point of view, the percipient and the thing perceived meet or are compresent *because of* the factors which intervene between them, while the truth seems to be that their compresence takes place *in spite of* the intervening media; and this means that perceiving involving the relation of compresence is ultimately unconditional and has for its objects things that are unconditioned or independent. Moreover, according to the view under discussion, perceiving is an act or function or process of the perceiving mind. But once perceiving is thus taken over to the side of the mind and is held to belong to it, the relation of compresence between mind and independently existing things, which is essential to perceptual knowledge, is rendered absolutely impossible.

Descartes is, however, one of those modern philosophers who may be said to have avoided the view of perceiving as a mechanically determined phenomenon. Although he conceived of perceiving as a mental process and was mainly responsible for the popularization of this conception of perceiving among the philosophers in modern times, it was

also he who, as is well-known, was the first among them to have separated the mind and whatever is mental from the realm of matter, which is indeed the special field of the operation of mechanical principles. So by viewing perceiving as a mental process, as he actually did, he, at least by implication, admitted the unconditionality of perceiving in the sense of its freedom from mechanical determination, no matter whether he intended to do so or not. But, then, it is doubtful whether the sphere of mind, even granted that it is separate from that of matter, is really impervious to mechanical determination. The history of philosophy did not, however, have to wait long to witness the pronouncement of a verdict against the fond belief of Descartes. His immediate successor, Spinoza, and, later, Hume had no hesitation in giving wider scope to mechanical causation and in holding that mental phenomena, however different they may be from physical phenomena, are as mechanically determined as the latter. Thus the idea of the unconditionality of perceiving had, at least for the time being, a quiet exit from the field of philosophy. But this is not to be regretted. For, perceiving regarded as a mental process, as previously observed, can make no room for the relation of 'compresence' which is essential to perceptual knowledge. And this is most obviously true when the mind, of which perceiving is said to be a process, is held to be dualistically related to physical things.

Quite a curious view of the nature of perceiving was advocated by Descartes' contemporary, Malebranche, and Malebranche's idealist confrère, Berkeley. The most striking feature of this view lies in its strange anomaly. Perceiving, which, according to it, consists in receiving 'ideas' or sensations, should on that account be said to be mechanically determined. But on account of the dismissal by its advocates of the independent reality of the material world, including the human body, perceiving even regarded as consisting in receiving sensations should be held to be free from mechanical determination. Yet the merit which thus accrues to this view of perceiving is a pure figment in as much as perceiving, according to it, is nothing but a kind of inner apprehension devoid of the true sense of our perceptual knowledge, viz., as our apprehension of things other than, and independent of, ourselves. This is, however, a difficulty of which no one, far less Malebranche and Berkeley, could be unaware. In fact, it is with a view to removing this difficulty that these philosophers surrendered perceiving, already freed

from mechanical determination by natural causes, to supernatural determination by God, and thus adopted a step which is unwarranted by any independent and unbiased analysis of perceptual experience. To perceive, as Malebranche held, is to surrender the individuality of the percipient to the determining influence of God and to participate in divine ideas, or, as Berkeley declared, to receive ideas communicated by God in the shape of copies of His own ideas. Thus the history of modern philosophy once more rejected the common-sense view of the nature of perceiving and secured a new ground for reaffirming the view that perceiving is conditional and that the objects of perceptual knowledge are contingent, not independent or unconditioned.

Truth, however, dies hard. The idea of the unconditionality of perceiving survived the failure of philosophers to understand its deeper significance; and it struggled back into the field of philosophy with the advent of Kant. In fact, Kant was the only philosopher in the history of modern philosophy to have made a serious attempt to show that perceiving, in the final analysis, is free from mechanical determination. As observed in our essay on 'The Doctrine of Inner Sense', Kant regarded the mind-body problem as of no consequence in the investigation of the problem of our knowledge of the external world, so that the consideration of the so-called physical and physiological conditions of perceiving is, in his view, out of place in the understanding of the nature of perceptual knowledge. The question which, however, still remained for him to answer was whether perceiving, as Hume had held, is mechanically determined by the laws of the inner working of the mind, the well-known laws of 'association'. And Kant's answer was that perceiving regarded as solely determined by these laws cannot yield perceptual knowledge in its true sense viz., as apprehension of objects characterized by unity and objectivity. Thus did Kant arrive at the view that perceiving, strictly speaking, is subject to no manner of mechanical determination, whether physical, physiological or psychological.

Kant did not, however, stop there, but found something more to say about the nature of perceiving. He, of course, realized the truth that perceiving is not a unipolar psychological phenomenon, but is essentially bipolar, involving the subject and the object held together in a peculiar relation. But at the same time he found himself unable to take the bipolarity of perceiving to mean 'compresence' in its strict

sense, viz., as the direct relation of the knowing mind or the subject with independently existing physical things regarded as its objects. According to him, the object standing in direct relationship with the subject cannot be anything unconditioned, but must be something conditioned, viz., the appearance of a thing-in-itself produced by certain determining factors. But, then, the conditionality of perceiving and its object, as seen above, could not, in Kant's view, be of a mechanical nature. In such a predicament Kant displayed considerable originality by introducing the new idea of the transcendental conditionality of perceiving. What he thereby meant is that any attempt to explain perceptual knowledge with reference to any condition that is an actual or possible object of this knowledge would amount to moving in a vicious circle and explaining it away, and that the required explanation should refer to those conditions that fall outside the field of perceptual knowledge and yet are such that this knowledge is inevitably dependent upon them. And Kant held that such conditions are the transcendental faculties of Sensibility, Imagination and Understanding on the side of the mind and things-in-themselves on the side of the external world.

The main difficulty of Kant's view of perceiving is, however, this, that it is part of the solution of a problem which, as we have seen in our first two essays, is not strictly legitimate—the problem how perceptual knowledge is possible. How the immediate mental reaction (usually mistaken for perceiving) and the physical and physiological processes, which invariably precede the occurrence of perceptual knowledge, take place, is, of course, a legitimate problem. And Kant accepted it as such. But its solution, as Kant rightly held, can throw no light on the nature of perceptual knowledge, because these factors; being themselves mechanically determined, cannot be said, in their turn, to determine, but only to constitute the *occasion* for, the occurrence of perceptual knowledge, and because 'compresence', being a unique relation unparalleled by any other that we know of, should naturally repel any manner of its interpretation as conditional. Kant then had no reason except his own prejudice for reverting to the view of perceiving as a conditional phenomenon by regarding it as transcendently determined, after having once realized that it is free from mechanical determination. By submitting his judgment to an extra-logical consideration in this manner he, however, missed the truth that we are capable of

knowing things in themselves, and reduced the world of our perceptual knowledge to a contingent status.

Now it is left for us to examine the view of perceiving as a conditional phenomenon with reference to its bearing upon the understanding of the perceiving mind, just as we have already examined it with reference to its bearing upon the understanding of the things perceived. To this end it is necessary to remember that the views discussed above are at one in holding that perceiving belongs to the perceiving mind in one sense or another. In what precise sense this is so would, however, be crucial in the matter.

Descartes at first held that consciousness including perceiving is the essence of mind. And at the same time, as previously seen, he separated the mind and whatever is mental from the world of matter, and thereby secured the unconditionality of perceiving as well as other acts of the mind, with the result that he found himself in a position to maintain the view of the mind as an independent or unconditioned existence. He, however, realized in the end that in the case of our perceptual experience at least, our mind is receptive and so subject to mechanical influence. As a result of this new position together with his earlier view that perceiving is a part of the essence of the mind, Descartes ought to have given up his original view of the mind as an independent or unconditioned existence. But he avoided this predicament by adopting a twofold device. On the one hand, he retraced his steps from all the modes of consciousness that are apt to be regarded as conditional and finally fixed his attention on will. And assuming that will is the only mode of consciousness which is, strictly, unconditioned or spontaneous, he arrived at the view that the independence or unconditionality of the mind lies in its volitional aspect. On the other, by taking shelter behind the difficult concept of 'mode', he held that all kinds of consciousness with the single exception of the will belong to the mind as its 'modes' and not as its essence. But apart from the question whether will is, as he held it to be, really unconditioned, Descartes, as a result of this procedure, committed himself to the acceptance of the distinction between the mind in itself or the independently existing mind and the mind as externally determined. He thus set on foot the dual way of viewing the mind which has appeared and reappeared in different forms throughout the history of modern philosophy and is perhaps not quite out of date in the philosophical world of today.

Malebranche's view of perceiving as supernaturally determined by God leaves him with the position that our mind as percipient is a mere participant in divine existence and has no independence of its own. And, in disagreement with Descartes, he argues that since will presupposes thought which is conditional and since we can conceive of mind apart from will just as we can conceive of body apart from motion, the mind in its volitional aspect cannot be an independent reality. Thus Malebranche seems to have realized that by viewing the different modes of consciousness including the will as belonging to the mind, we can have no idea of such a thing as the independently existing mind. Yet he was not willing to give up this idea, nor was he prepared to revise his view of the modes of consciousness as conditional and as belonging to the mind. On the contrary, he believed that the mind must be independent; because if it is not so, it cannot be *free*, and because in the absence of human freedom there cannot be, as there ought to be, what is called morality. In this circumstance he was constrained to admit that freedom is an inscrutable mystery, and that the independently existing mind is unknown and unknowable. Thus Malebranche, like Descartes, adopted the dual way of viewing the mind. But his view of the mind in itself as unknown and unknowable, unlike Descartes' view of it as knowable and known as essentially volitional, lacked positive philosophical value.

Berkeley, who followed Malebranche in regarding perceiving as supernaturally determined by God, ought to have, on this very account, held, in agreement with the latter, that our mind at least as percipient has no independence of its own, but is dependent on God. Moreover, as one who denied material substance on the ground that it is 'invisible' and 'inefficacious', he ought to have denied spiritual substance also on the same ground, as Hume actually did later, and to have held, like Hume, that our mind is ultimately contingent, being a mere aggregate of mechanically determined mental phenomena. But Berkeley did neither, owing to his acceptance of a belief which was not based on any logical reason nor was arrived at through any independent philosophical investigation, but was purely dogmatic, as it was in the case of Descartes—the belief that our mind is a substance or an independent reality. It is under the influence of this belief that Berkeley, while accepting Locke's view that our knowledge of physical things takes place through the intermediary of 'ideas' produced in our mind, differed

from the latter by holding that we apprehend our mind not indirectly and mediately from 'ideas' of it, but in a peculiarly direct and immediate manner in virtue of 'notion'. By thus disallowing the application of representationism in the understanding of self-knowledge, Berkeley avoided the view of the mind as a contingent existence which Hume later came to uphold. But he gave no reason whatsoever for viewing self-knowledge differently from outer knowledge. Nor did he explain why the peculiar directness and immediacy which, in his view, characterizes self-knowledge cannot also be characteristic of our knowledge of the physical world.

Some of the philosophers of modern times headed by Hume, who held that perceiving is mechanically determined, came to uphold the view that it belongs to the mind in the simple sense that it is one of the constituent factors of the latter. And they admitted without hesitation or compunction the logical consequence of this position, viz., that the mind, being an assemblage of contingent mental phenomena including perceiving, is itself contingent. The mistake of this view of the mind is, however, the exact parallel of the mistake of the view of physical things held by idealism. Just as idealism commits the mistake of reducing physical things, supposedly the causes of sensations, to sensations themselves, so Hume and his followers fell into the mistake of reducing the mind, which is the basis of mental phenomena and imparts meaning to their very name, to mental phenomena themselves. However that may be, once it is held that perceiving is conditional, and also that it is a mental phenomenon among others of its kind and as such belongs to the mind, there is left no way out of Hume's view of the mind as a contingent existence. And this brings out the untenability and arbitrariness of the views of the mind we have considered above.

Kant, as seen above, agreed with his predecessors in admitting, in a sense, the conditionality of perceiving, but differed from them by holding the view that its conditions are not to be found within the field of our knowledge, but must be of a transcendental character. It is perhaps partly on account of his admission of the conditionality of perceiving and partly on account of the influence of his predecessors upon him that he conceived the mind or rather the self to be, in a sense, conditional. But while his predecessors held the straightforward view that the contingent self is made up of the conditional mental phenomena including perceiving, he himself, as we have seen in our essay

on 'The Doctrine of Inner Sense', could not definitely ascertain its constituent factors. But instead of surrendering, on this account, the doctrine of the contingent self, as he should have done, he retained it, while making amends for this weakness on his part by arguing that no matter how or under what conditions perceiving takes place, perceptual knowledge as such implies something that is ultimate and irreducible, viz., the knower or the subject. Kant thus brought to light an altogether new aspect of the self.

Kant's position in regard to the problem of self is thus divergent from that of Hume, who knew of no other aspect of the self than that in which it is merely an aggregate of contingent mental phenomena. But one cannot, as, perhaps, Hume also could not, help wondering how one and the same thing, viz., the mind or the self, could have two mutually contradictory aspects, being, on the one hand, made up of contingent mental phenomena and, on the other, irreducible to them. The way out of this difficulty would, however, seem to lie in admitting Hume's position, according to which the self has one aspect and one aspect only—the aspect in which it is contingent. Or, if Hume's position, as Kant's analysis of perceptual knowledge correctly shows, is untenable, the solution of the difficulty would demand the view that perceiving regarded as a conditional phenomenon is a mere *occasion* for the occurrence of perceptual knowledge, and that this knowledge itself is unconditional, being the compresence of the unconditioned self figuring as subject and an unconditioned thing figuring as object. This view would obviously preclude the possibility of understanding the self in terms of contingent phenomena like perceiving and, consequently, of conceiving it to be contingent.

Kant, however, not only allowed the difficulty in question to remain, but made his already complicated view of the self more complicated by admitting, like some of his predecessors, such a thing as the self in itself or the noumenal self, and holding that even the consideration of the self as subject, not to speak of that of the self in its contingent aspect, can yield no information about the nature of the noumenal self. And it is precisely this view that finds expression in Kant's declaration that the self in itself is unknown and unknowable. His real meaning is that, theoretically, we are entitled to the admission of the mere *idea* of the self in itself, but are absolutely unable to affirm its reality and to determine its characteristics. But here lies the crux of the situation. We

cannot speak of the contingent aspect, or, to use Kant's own terminology, the 'appearance' of a thing, if that thing in itself cannot at the same time be affirmed to be an actual existence. So Kant, who holds that from the theoretical point of view the self in itself is a mere idea, not an actual existence, is not entitled to the view that is held by him, viz., that the self, the existence of which is affirmed from this point of view, is contingent or an appearance. On the contrary, he should have held, as Hume may be said to have done, that the distinction between the self in itself and the contingent self is spurious, and that the self has only one aspect, viz., that in which it is contingent.

The reply of Kant, however, is that the self should be viewed not only from the theoretical standpoint but also from the standpoint of morality, and that morality demands the reality of the noumenal self endowed with such characteristics as we are unable to ascertain from the former standpoint. But even then, Kant's difficulty would be that the two standpoints being diverse, we can have no means of ascertaining how the self as viewed from one of them is related to itself when viewed from the other; far less can we be sure that the self as viewed from the theoretical standpoint is only a contingent aspect or an appearance of the self in itself, that is, the self as it is from the standpoint of morality.

The conclusion to which we are driven is, therefore, this, that once perceiving is viewed to be ultimately conditional and is at the same time regarded as a phenomenon belonging to the mind, there is hardly any escape from Hume's view which holds that the mind or the self, the reality of which is established on strict philosophical grounds and without reference to any prejudice or extra-logical consideration, is ultimately constituted by the so-called mental phenomena including perceiving. The net result of the foregoing discussion as a whole, then, is that the traditional views of the nature of perceiving have succeeded in condemning not only the physical world but also the mind or the self to a contingent status.

*The Ways of viewing Perceiving in
Recent Realistic Philosophy*

Most of the difficult issues involved in the views of perceiving discussed above are allowed by the recent realists to remain more or less unchanged. The fact is that these philosophers have not devoted so

much attention to the problem of perceiving as they have done to that of the objects of perceptual experience. Their doctrines of sense-data are indeed the result of a serious endeavour on their part to remove the difficulties of the traditional theory of 'ideas'; but their views of the nature of perceiving, as we shall see below, are in most cases moored to tradition. So they are not expected to differ among themselves so widely in their understanding of the nature of perceiving as they do in their view of the immediate objects of perceptual experience. All the recent schools of realism have accepted the usual scientific view of the nature of perceiving, according to which it is due to the mechanical operation of certain physical and physiological factors. But while the philosophical tradition established since the time of Descartes has generally remained committed to the view of perceiving as a mental phenomenon, a few among the recent realists have made a bold departure from this view. In fact, dissidence from philosophical tradition in this respect is confined to the small circle of the American New Realists.

Some of the recent realists have, however, drawn a qualitative distinction between the world of physical things and the world of mind. Moore regarded this distinction as ultimate and irreducible. He was, however, aware of the difficulty of detecting the distinctiveness of mental acts including perceiving. But he, in effect, ignored this difficulty by declaring that it is due to the diaphaneity of mental acts. Mental acts, he said, are so transparent that when we look for them we generally miss them, and find ourselves in possession of their objects! Russell, in his earlier writings, also admitted the qualitative distinction between mind and physical things and regarded it as ultimate. In his earlier view, there are minds on one side, and physical things on the other, and the former immediately apprehend the effects, viz., sense-data, produced by the latter in conjunction with the sense-organs. Alexander, however, differed from Moore and this position of Russell by holding that both mind and physical things are ultimately derivable from Space-Time, so that the distinction between the two, according to him, is not metaphysically ultimate. Nevertheless, he insisted that from the epistemological point of view we should regard the act of perceiving and the immediate objects of perception, viz., sense-data, as qualitatively distinct, in terms of the view that the former is mental and the latter physical. The Critical Realists, Drake and his collaborators,

are in the company of Moore and Russell in virtue of their view of this distinction as ultimate, and are opposed to the American New Realists' view of both mind and physical things as alike derivable from a certain neutral stuff. Some of the recent realists like Stout have not only admitted an ultimate qualitative distinction between mind and physical things, but, as previously seen, have gone further in holding that the immediate objects of perception are mental, not physical.

But once it is admitted, as was done by Moore and Russell in his earlier writings, that the world of mind and the world of physical things ultimately differ in quality, perceiving cannot be held to be, as in the view of these philosophers it is, a mental phenomenon and yet determined by physical and physiological conditions. It is perhaps in view of this difficulty that Holt and his collaborators in the School of New Realism have come to hold an alternative view of the nature of perceiving. As previously indicated, they share with other realist philosophers of recent times the view that perceiving is physically and physiologically conditioned. But they have not only not admitted the qualitative distinction between the realm of mind and that of physical things, but have also gone further than Alexander in holding that whatever is usually regarded as mental even from the epistemological point of view forms, in common with physical things, part of the world of neutral existence. Perceiving, according to them, is then homogeneous with physical or physiological phenomena. Thus have the American New Realists come to differ from other realists of recent times who generally regard perceiving as a mental phenomenon.

Now, in so far as they hold that perceiving is homogeneous with physical phenomena, the American New Realists have no difficulty whatsoever in regarding it as dependent upon physical and physiological conditions. But the removal of this difficulty is perhaps not the only object they have in view in advocating such an unusual view of the nature of perceiving. It seems to be a part of their intention to use this view in the vindication of the independent reality of the physical world. Of course, we cannot affirm the reality of physical things except in so far as we perceive them. That being so, the question arises: what should the nature of perceiving be in order that the things perceived may be said to be independent realities? The answer of these philosophers is expressed in their view of perceiving as a phenomenon of the same kind as those in the physical world. They do not, however,

seem to have arrived at this view as a result of an independent enquiry into the nature of perceiving. Their main consideration in this respect, perhaps, is that the admission of the independent reality of physical things is incompatible with belief in the separate reality of mind and mental phenomena including perceiving, as is shown by the fact that those philosophers who entertain this belief are generally unable to maintain the view of physical things as independent realities or even go as far as to prepare the ground for the denial of the independent reality of the physical world.

Curiously, however, the American New Realists are in agreement with other realists of recent times in holding not only that perceiving is mechanically determined but also that all modes of consciousness including perceiving, though dependent upon the function of the nervous system, occur not within, but outside, the nervous system. But the question is: where, in their view, can consciousness fall? Realists other than Holt and his collaborators admit two distinct sections of reality, the world of mind and mental phenomena being one, and the world of matter the other. So they have no difficulty in giving a clear answer to this question. But Holt, in so far as he recognizes only one section of reality, has obviously no straightforward answer to offer. Yet he tries to come out of this predicament by holding that a response of the nervous system cuts off a small section of the world that includes it and also spreads beyond it, and that consciousness is constituted by the section thus cut off. But this view is open to the following difficulties.

The above view of Holt implies that nervous response and consciousness are inseparable, which obviously amounts to the denial of unconscious nervous responses such as those which take place in a state of dreamless sleep. Out of this difficulty there is no way except the one that lies in the disputed view adopted by Holt in common with some other philosophers, viz., that there is no such thing as unconsciousness in the sense of complete absence of consciousness, and that the so-called unconsciousness differs from consciousness in degree, not in kind. But a more serious difficulty of Holt's view of the nature of perceiving arises out of the fact that, according to it, the section of the world cut off by a nervous response should at once be both consciousness and its object. This does not, of course, mean that he is a mentalist like Berkeley; because, in his view, consciousness itself is not mental,

and because he, instead of reducing the object to a state of consciousness as mentalism does, finds himself in a position to hold that consciousness accrues to a thing when the nervous system responds to it, and disappears on the cessation of the response of the nervous system, leaving the thing to itself. But, then, the object of consciousness must be something distinct and determinate or, to use Holt's terminology, some *specific* cross-section of the world, and not his undifferentiated and indeterminate 'neutral' stuff. And understood in this sense, the object of consciousness, in his view, must be inseparable from the consciousness of it, with the result that he would have no means of admitting its independent reality.

Let us now proceed to consider how the two views of the nature of perceiving distinguished above respectively bear upon the question of the relation between perceiving or rather the perceiving mind and the things perceived. To this end it is necessary to bear in mind that the realists of recent times have generally drawn a distinction between the immediate objects of sense called sense-data and the world of perceptual knowledge. Granted, however, that it is justifiable to draw this distinction, there is no getting away from admitting that the possibility of perceptual knowledge demands at least this, that perceiving and sense-data be directly and immediately related or, in other words, be com-present. But those, who, like Moore, regard perceiving as mental and sense-data as physical and at the same time hold that the two are ultimately different in quality, are obviously precluded from admitting the relation of compresence between them. In fact, the question of the relation between perceiving and sense-data is as difficult in the case of these philosophers as had been that of the relation between mind and body in the case of Descartes and the Cartesians.

Alexander, who also conceives perceiving to be a mental phenomenon and sense-data to be of a physical character, may, however, claim exemption from this difficulty by appealing to his view that there is ultimately no qualitative distinction between the world of mind and the world of physical things. But even then, he loses sight of an important truth which may be stated as follows. In an enquiry into the nature of perceptual knowledge, at least two points should be kept in view: (i) that perceiving and the immediate object of perception are directly related, and (ii) that neither of the two is reducible to the other. But while dualistically minded philosophers like Moore have taken

notice of the latter point and ignored the former, Alexander as a monist has done just the opposite in emphasizing the importance of the former and ignoring the latter.

Yet it goes to the credit of Alexander to emphasize the uniqueness of the phenomenon of perceiving. But even then, its uniqueness, in his view, does not concern its *relation* with its object; it is due to the peculiarity of the perceiving mind. Alexander holds that the relation between the table and the floor and that between the perceiving mind and the floor are of the same kind. But the fact that the latter relation does, while the former does not, constitute knowledge is, according to him, due merely to the latter's having a perceiving mind, instead of a thing like the table, as one of its terms. The merit of this position, however, lies in its recognition of the simple truth that knowledge is impossible apart from the knowing mind. But it takes no cognisance of the fact that the cognitive relation takes place not *because of*, but *in spite of*, all that intervenes between the knowing mind and the thing known, which means that as a relation it is unique, being in a class apart from spatial and temporal relations. And it is on this account that Alexander has been misled into the understanding of the cognitive relation on the analogy of spatial relations and, by implication, of perceiving on the analogy of physical phenomena. Moore also has been similarly misled, as is quite evident from his straightforward declaration that the relation between the perceiving mind and the thing perceived is spatial, being the relation of togetherness in one space, like the relation between the table and the floor.

We should not, however, fail to appreciate the merit of a standpoint like that of Moore, according to which sense-data are ultimately heterogeneous from perceiving regarded as a mental phenomenon. If the former are homogeneous with, not heterogeneous from, the latter, there would in the long run be, it may be feared, no escape from idealism, as is sufficiently demonstrated by Berkeley's deduction of this theory from Locke's doctrine of 'ideas'. But then, Moore's standpoint avoids idealism at a heavy cost—the cost of the 'com-presence' of perceiving and the sense-data. It is perhaps in view of this difficulty that some of the realists of recent times like Stout deemed it worth while to retain the old doctrine of 'ideas', instead of replacing it by a doctrine of 'sense-data'. But how physical things can produce sensations that are utterly disparate from them is bound to

prove too difficult a problem for them to solve, just as it did in the case of Descartes and his followers.

It is then clear that the views of the nature of perceiving and the immediate objects of sense considered above are unable to yield a satisfactory understanding of the nature of perceptual knowledge, so that there arises the necessity for their complete revision. But since views once made current die hard, philosophers may not be expected to realize this necessity all at once, and what they may immediately find feasible to do in the circumstances is to conceive of the immediate objects of sense so as to allay the acuteness of the difficulties which the above discussion has brought to light. This is precisely what is done by the Critical Realists by means of their conception of sense-data as 'essences' or logical subsistents. Since sense-data thus conceived are no more mental than physical, the difficulty about their supposed origin from physical and physiological causes should not be so acute as it would be on the understanding of them as having a mental character. Nor, it may be held, would the difficulty about the possibility of the relation of compresence between perceiving and sense-data be as great as it would be when sense-data are conceived to be of a physical character. But difficulty in either respect would still remain. For, it is certainly not easy to explain why the immediate objects of sense produced by physical and physiological processes should be logical subsistents instead of existents. Nor can it be granted that perception has for its immediate objects logical subsistents instead of existents, because this would obviously obliterate the distinction between perceiving and abstract thinking.

Now, in the view of the American New Realists, as previously seen, there can be no qualitative distinction between the world of mind and the world of physical things from the standpoint of metaphysics and even from that of epistemology. Consequently, they are ahead of Alexander because he, while discarding this distinction from his metaphysical standpoint, retained it on the epistemological level, nay, made it rigid and pronounced by drawing a distinction between our knowledge of the mind and our knowledge of physical things in terms of the view that the mind can only be 'enjoyed', not 'contemplated', whereas physical things can only be 'contemplated', not 'enjoyed'. However that may be, as a result of their elimination of the time-honoured qualitative distinction between the two worlds, these philosophers are

in the most favourable position to admit the 'compresence' of perceiving and the object of perception. But, then, as previously seen, perceiving and the object of perception, in their view, are only two aspects of one and the same thing. That being so, the relation of compresence that they can admit is really meaningless, because the object held in the relation of compresence with perceiving or rather with the perceiving mind must be *other* to the latter, which it cannot be, since the two, in their view, are ultimately the same, being but two aspects of one and the same thing.

The question, however, remains whether their view of the nature of perceiving enables the realists of recent times to account for our perceptual knowledge in its strict sense, viz., as our apprehension of, and belief in, the *common* world of physical things. Now, as previously seen, these philosophers share among themselves the view that perceiving is conditional and, consequently, that its immediate object is not anything common, but something contingent, relative and *private*. That being so, they should naturally be unable to entertain even the idea of perceptual knowledge in this sense, far from being able to account for it, because our apprehension being immediately confined to sense-data, we can have no means of recognizing them as private and of envisaging the idea of a common world of physical things in contrast with which the sense-data are private. But unaware of this difficulty, and with unshaken belief in the conditionality of perceiving and in the validity of the doctrine of sense-data, they have made attempts to account for our knowledge of the common world of physical things.

Some of them, of whom Russell is the most prominent, hold that our knowledge of the common world of physical things is due to a process called 'logical construction' having sense-data to use as its materials, and that this world, which is the product of this process, is the logical configuration of the private sense-data. The merit of this view, however, lies in that, despite its use of the word 'logical' in naming the process of knowing the common world of physical things, the process, on account of its having only sense-data to deal with, is not conceptual, but empirical as it should be. But that does not mean that Russell's standpoint of viewing perceptual knowledge is, strictly, empirical. On the contrary, his epistemological position belies the empirical standpoint, because, from this standpoint, the process of

knowing the common world of physical things is *discovering*, not, as Russell holds, *constructing*, and because this world can only be *given*, and not, as Russell believes, be a *product of construction*. His view of sense-data as *given*, we should not fail to notice, is only a travesty of the empirical standpoint, because, as we shall see later,¹ the so-called sense-data are results of construction, or, let us say, abstraction or inference. Moreover, as we have observed earlier, no process can construct out of sense-data a world which is free from their physical and physiological contingency and is, therefore, common. The fact is that Russell's treatment of the problem of our knowledge of the external world is vitiated by the causal view of perceiving which holds that perceiving, in an ultimate analysis, consists in receiving the effects, viz., sense-data, produced by physical things. Once perceiving is viewed in this manner, the possibility of the belief in a common world of physical things is left behind once for all. But this is a difficulty which applies not only to the epistemological position of Russell but to that of all other realists of recent times.

The difficulty, however, seems to be the greatest in the case of the realists like Stout, according to whom the immediate objects of sense are mental, being sensations produced in our mind by independently existing physical things. The reason is not merely that they are faced with an insoluble problem from which realists like Russell are free—the problem how physical things can produce sensations which are absolutely disparate from them. The more important reason is that our knowledge of the external world, which, according to them, should naturally be indirect and mediate and take place through the intermediary of our sensations, must be an impossibility, because this world, being absolutely disparate from our sensations, cannot be known from the latter. And it is for this reason that Berkeley dismissed the very notion of the external world in the sense of an extra-mental reality and Kant declared that world to be unknown and unknowable. Nevertheless, the epistemological position of philosophers like Stout suggests a truth (the deeper significance of which they, however, themselves missed) which never struck Moore and Russell—the truth that perceptual knowledge involves a unique phenomenon, viz., transcendence on the part of the perceiving mind to the external world. This phenomenon is obviously such that it not only does not fit in with the causal

¹ *Vide infra*, p. 177.

view of perceiving, but is contradictory to the validity of this view and its implications.

The fact is that the causal view of perceiving and representationism consequent thereupon are really contradictory to the possibility of our knowledge of the external world or, let us say, the common world of physical things. But epistemologists have generally failed to shake off the influence of tradition and to realize the full importance of this fact. The utmost they have so far been able to do, however, is not to surrender the causal view of perceiving and representationism, but only to reduce the acuteness of the consequential epistemological difficulty. Thus the Critical Realists have replaced the more retractable conception of the immediate objects of sense as sensations by the less retractable view of them as logical subsistents, and the more abstract view of the *transcending act* as thinking or inferring by the less abstract view of it as 'imagining'. But even then, the old difficulties of representationism remain where they were. As previously observed, this new conception of the immediate objects of sense does not remove the old difficulty as to their origin from physical and physiological causes. Nor can the new conception of the transcending act make any substantial difference to the difficulty regarding the mind's passage from sense-data to the physical world. On the contrary, it creates a new difficulty which is as follows.

Drake, a leading member of the school of Critical Realism, came to realize that perceptual knowledge cannot take place except in so far as there is contact between perceiving or rather the perceiving mind and physical things to be perceived. But in view of the fact that from his dualistic standpoint such contact cannot be an actual fact, he quite curiously held that the contact in demand need not be *actual*, but may only be *virtual*. Accordingly, he said: 'We do, indeed, in a sense, immediately grasp or apprehend (are conscious, or aware, of) outer objects.' But, he continued, 'it is a logical, essential, virtual grasp of objects.'¹ And in order that perceptual knowledge could be held to involve the contact between the perceiving mind and physical things to be perceived in the sense in which he understood it, he came to conceive of perceiving as 'imagining'.

But in following this procedure Drake took too lenient a view of the difficulty of his initial dualistic standpoint, because this standpoint

¹ Drake and others, *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 28

precludes the possibility of the contact in question in every possible sense, including that in which he understood it. Moreover, his view of the nature of perceiving, corresponding to his conception of the *contact*, involves a gross misunderstanding of this process of knowing. The contact between the perceiving mind and the thing perceived being, according to him, *virtual*, and perceiving being, for him, 'imagining', the proposition, say, 'I see a table', should, in his view, mean 'I *as if* know the table', which, obviously, cannot be its meaning. The only consideration which Drake could have in view in conceiving of perceiving in such an unusual manner is, however, that we cannot be too sure about the truth of our perceptual experience, and that this experience is liable to be erroneous. But this consideration, however important it may be in the epistemological enquiry, should not be brought to bear upon the understanding of the nature of perceptual experience as such, because veridical perception, the possibility of which is undeniable, is free from the liability to being erroneous, and because every perceptual judgment, as we have previously observed, bears an original claim to truth.

It seems, however, that among the realists of recent times the Critical Realists have come nearest to the truth about perceptual knowledge in so far as they have realized that this knowledge demands the contact or direct relation between the perceiving mind and the thing to be perceived and, by implication, that it presupposes the transcendence on the part of the mind to outer objects. But, on account of their advocacy of the causal view of perceiving and the doctrine of sense-data consequent thereupon, this truth has eluded their grasp. Yet they have never lost sight of the truth, as is evident from the fact that they have in the end upheld a position which leads their dualism and their causal view of perceiving nearest the vanishing point and reduces their doctrine of sense-data almost to a superfluity. Drake started, as from his original standpoint it was natural for him to do, by insisting that neither outer objects nor sense-data are mental, and that the mental process or state involved in the perceptual situation does not admit of characterization by any physical quality. Accordingly, he stated that in the case of our perception, say, of 'a round wheel about three feet in diameter', our mental state is not 'round' nor 'three feet in diameter'. Yet, curiously enough, he observed that the sense-data are given by means of certain qualities of the mental state, viz., 'an elongated oval

shape of greyish colour, changing position between other masses of colour . . .', and that this 'fringe' of mental stuff leads readily to discourse concerning a 'wheel'.¹ But this makes no secret of the fact that, according to him, the so-called mental state has characteristics which can by no stretch of imagination be called mental, but should rather be regarded as physical, and, consequently, that he was no more under the spell of his initial dualistic standpoint. And once he thus came to ascribe physical qualities to the so-called mental state, he was no longer in need of the sense-data in accounting for the possibility of perceptual knowledge, nor was it necessary for him to retain the causal view of perceiving. And, further, he could secure the mind's transcendence to, or contact with, the thing to be perceived, which, according to him, is demanded by the possibility of perceptual knowledge.

To the American New Realists the problem of perceptual knowledge is, however, different from what it is to Stout and the Critical Realists. According to them, this problem has no concern with the perceiving mind's contact with, or transcendence to, outer objects, as it has in the view of the latter. They are rather in agreement with Russell in so far as his epistemological theory makes no reference to such contact or transcendence, but holds that the object of perceptual knowledge is to be found in and through the immediate objects of sense. But, then, they also differ from Russell by holding that the problem of perceptual knowledge is not how the common world of physical things is constructed from private sense-data, but just the opposite, viz., how the particular objects of my perceptual knowledge or yours or anybody else's are constructed out of a common world of reality which is there, standing in no need of construction on its own account. This world, according to them, is what is revealed by our 'immediate experience', which, however, is not the same as our perceptual knowledge. Thus revealed, the world, according to them, is a mass of undifferentiated and indeterminate neutral stuff. But the objects of our perceptual knowledge are naturally differentiated and determinate. That being so, the problem of perceptual knowledge, as they find it, is: how the so-called world of reality is differentiated into the determinate objects which we are said to know by means of perception.

The solution of this problem is given by the American New Realists in terms of the view to which reference has already been made—the

¹ Drake and others, *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 29.

view that our nervous responses cut small cross-sections off the so-called world of reality, and that such cross-sections are the determinate objects of our perceptual knowledge. Of the difficulties of this view some have, however, been previously noticed.¹ But those that are specially relevant to the present context are as follows. Most obviously, this view is vitiated by circular reasoning. The nervous response held to be the *precondition* of the differentiation of the so-called world of reality is itself a determinate phenomenon and so should, according to it, be itself a result of the differentiation of that world. Hence it is clear that by already granting the differentiation of the so-called world of reality, this view admits the nervous response, and then it treats the latter as the presupposition of the former. The fact, however, is that this difficulty is the inevitable consequence of the absurd procedure which seeks to deduce determinate objects of perceptual knowledge from ultimate reality so preconceived as to be lacking in the preconditions of the possibility of this knowledge. And this indicates that the mass of undifferentiated and indeterminate neutral stuff is neither the object of our 'immediate experience' nor is the world of reality, but a product of purely a priori construction. That being so, what these philosophers were really required to do, no matter whether or not it was the correct thing to do, was to deal with the problem which Russell regarded as of fundamental importance in epistemology, but of which they were unconscious—the problem of the construction of the common world of physical things. And this ought to have been so specially for the reason that the cross-sections cut by nervous responses off the so-called world of reality cannot but be relative and private.

We may conclude with an enquiry into the bearing of the recent realists' views of the nature of perceiving upon the understanding of the self or mind. To this end it is necessary to bear in mind that the view of perceiving as a contingent phenomenon is common to all these philosophers. Now, if the mind be understood in terms of perceiving and other processes of its kind thus viewed, the undeniable unity and continuity or rather the pervasive I-consciousness of mental life would naturally be left unaccounted for. The question, then, is whether these philosophers can, notwithstanding their advocacy of the view of perceiving as contingent, account for these aspects of mental life.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the contingency of perceiving

¹ *Vide ante*, pp. 107-8.

and other processes homogeneous with it will not affect the unity and continuity of mental life, if the mind be held to be an independent reality. So Stout, the Critical Realists and Russell,¹ who advocated this view of the mind, had no difficulty in accounting for these aspects of mental life. But while they could thus avoid this difficulty, they invited another on that very account. The mind being an independent reality, how could the so-called *mental* processes including perceiving be contingent, nay, determined by causes from outside the mind, as, in their view, they are? This is the insoluble problem with which they were left as a result of the explanation that they had to offer of the unity and continuity of mental life. It is, however, of interest to notice the curious fact that in his earlier works, Russell, while holding that the physical world is not an independent reality but is in need of construction from the immediate objects of sense, did not bring a similar standpoint to bear upon his understanding of the mind, but was obedient to the Cartesian tradition in upholding the view that it is an independent reality. This shows that he, like Berkeley before him, confined the application of the empirical standpoint to the understanding of the physical world, withholding it from the understanding of the mind.

But Alexander, while holding that perceiving and other processes homogeneous with it are mental, extended the application of the empirical standpoint to his understanding of the mind, with the result that he precluded himself from conceiving of it as an independent reality. And this was quite in keeping with his metaphysical standpoint, because from that standpoint the mind could no more be held to be independently real than physical things. However that may be, he had nothing to take into account on the side of the mind except the introspective data, the so-called mental acts and processes. In consequence, the view of the mind to which he entitled himself was that it is a construction from these acts and processes which, by their very nature, are contingent. Obviously, therefore, he could have no option but to leave the unity and continuity of mental life unaccounted for. In fact, the difficulty of Alexander's view of the mind is parallel to that of the view of the physical world as a construction from the immediate objects of sense. In any case, in his understanding of the mind, he committed the mistake of elevating the passing mental acts and processes to the status of the mind characterized by unity and continuity.

¹ So far as his position in his works earlier than the *Analysis of Mind* is concerned.

Holt, the leading figure among the American New Realists, made an attempt to understand the nature of the mind afresh and differently from other realists of recent times. In fact, one of his objects was to derive his view of the mind from an impartial and unbiased consideration of the central fact about it. This fact, according to him, is that all the various activities of the mind are guided by one *purpose*. Accordingly, he held that the essence of the mind lies in a unity of purpose. Thus he made a complete departure from the traditional substance-theory of the mind involving the erroneous understanding of it on the analogy of physical things, by employing, in his characterization of it, the more appropriate category of purpose in place of the less appropriate physical category of substance.

But even the new outlook which Holt thus brought to bear upon his view of the mind provides no guarantee of its satisfactoriness. On the contrary, there are strong reasons to contradict its validity. In the first place, purpose, like other mental phenomena such as perception, thought, etc., is bipolar or double-sided, implying the mind to which it is said to belong and something other than the mind to which it is directed. So in understanding the mind in terms of purpose, Holt either ignored the bipolarity of purpose or committed the mistake of understanding the mind not as it is in itself, but in terms of its relation to something else. Secondly, while it may be that some of our actions or most of the actions of some men are governed by one single purpose, most of our actions or the actions of the majority of men are governed by different purposes at different times, and the purposes may even conflict with one another. If that be so, it would follow that the majority of men are without a mind or that all men are at least sometimes devoid of it. It may, however, be replied that no matter whether we are conscious of it or not, all our actions are motivated by a purpose, and that this purpose is the preservation and safety of our lives. And this brings out the true meaning of Holt's view of the mind. It is by understanding purpose in the wide biological sense that he came to admit the so-called unity of purpose, and thereby enabled himself to understand the mind in terms of this unity. But even then, the difficulty remained that the unity and continuity of mental life is in all probability peculiar to human beings, whereas the so-called unity of biological purpose is common to all living creatures, including those in whom these characteristics of mental life are not to be met with.

Yet the merit of Holt's view of the mind consisted in the realization of the truth that the cognitive mental processes like perceiving, being notoriously objective in the sense of having obviously to point to what is *other* to the mind, cannot be said to express the unity, continuity and, above all, the inwardness or internality of the mind. It is, perhaps, in course of his search after that aspect of mental life which is free from this drawback of its cognitive aspect that Holt, like voluntarists in general, hit upon the purposive side of life; but, unlike most of the voluntarists, he understood purpose in too wide a sense.

IV

THE PROBLEM OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE

The word 'self-knowledge', as used in epistemological literature, generally means our apprehension of ourselves or rather the states, processes or acts of our mind. Understood in this sense, self-knowledge is usually regarded as parallel to, and co-ordinate with, our knowledge of the external world. It is thus taken to be a kind of empirical knowledge, from which should be distinguished that kind of knowledge in whose case there is no apprehension of anything as an *object*, and yet the existence of a thing or things can be affirmed, and even their nature and characteristics ascertained. The latter may be called transcendental awareness in distinction from empirical knowledge consisting in the apprehension of things as objects. Notice should, however, be taken of the sense in which self-knowledge has no epistemological importance but has a purely metaphysical bearing in that it points to a supposed peculiarity of the self, viz., self-luminosity. What this means is that the self, unlike physical things that are revealed only as objects of the self's apprehension, is revealed *in itself*.

Even from the empirical point of view, the meaning of self-knowledge is not, however, free from ambiguity. In fact, epistemologists are not agreed among themselves as to the manner in which our empirical apprehension of our mental states, processes and acts takes place. Some hold that, no matter whether our knowledge of physical things takes place directly and immediately or indirectly and mediately, our knowledge of the states and processes and acts of our mind cannot but be direct and immediate. Others, on the contrary, hold that self-know-

ledge as a form of empirical apprehension is, strictly speaking, analogous to outer knowledge. And, on the assumption that outer knowledge takes place indirectly and mediate through the intermediary of such things as the immediate objects of sense, they arrive at the view that self-knowledge takes place in a similar manner, viz., through the intermediary of certain objects parallel to the immediate objects of sense.

The problem of self-knowledge is further complicated when it is placed in the context of the question whether the self is identical with, or distinct from, the so-called mental acts, states or processes. Of course, if it be held, as the empiricists in general hold, that the two are identical, then those among these philosophers, who hold that our knowledge of our mental acts, states and processes is direct and immediate, would easily be in a position to admit the possibility of our knowledge of the self in itself. But those who, on the contrary, regard self-knowledge as indirect and mediate would obviously find it difficult to account for our knowledge of the self in itself. This difficulty would obviously increase if it were held that the self is not identical with, but distinct from, mental acts, states and processes, no matter whether our knowledge of them is direct and immediate or indirect and mediate.

Now, some of the realists of recent times, of whom Alexander is the most prominent, hold that our knowledge of our mental acts is direct and immediate, while others, like the Critical Realists, hold that this knowledge, like the knowledge of outer objects, is indirect and mediate. The Critical Realists further hold that our knowledge of our mental acts resembles our knowledge of outer objects in another respect, viz., in that both alike involve the subject-object relation. But Alexander, on the contrary, holds that while our apprehension or, to use his own word, 'contemplation' of outer objects involves the subject-object relation, our apprehension or, in his own word, 'enjoyment' of our mental acts is different, being our living them or their being immanent in ourselves. 'My self-knowledge is knowledge consisting in myself', says Alexander.

On account of their view that, in the case of our apprehension of our mental acts, it is not the mental acts themselves but the effects produced by them or their appearances that we directly and immediately apprehend, the Critical Realists are, however, faced with the difficult question as to how we can at all know mental acts themselves. The way out of this difficulty, if there be any at all, should naturally be similar to

that which they have adopted in removing their difficulty as to the possibility of our knowledge of outer things themselves. And it would consist in stating that, as in the case of our outer knowledge we pass on from empirically apprehended sense-data to outer things themselves by means of the process of 'imagination', 'projection' or 'belief', so in the case of our inner knowledge we pass on from empirically apprehended appearances of mental acts to mental acts themselves by means of the same process. But even then, there would remain difficulties similar to those to which they have already been found to be open in connection with their solution of the problem of our knowledge of outer things themselves. The most fundamental of their difficulties, the one that vitiates their entire epistemological position, is, however, as follows. Since the immediate objects of knowledge, in their view, are appearances, they have no means of recognizing the distinction, if there be any, between the appearances of outer things and those of mental acts, and, consequently, they cannot speak of self-knowledge as distinguished from outer knowledge or of the latter in distinction from the former.

Nevertheless, it goes to the credit of the Critical Realists to realize the truth which Alexander misses, viz., that empirical knowledge, strictly speaking, involves the subject-object relation, and that self-knowledge regarded as a form of empirical knowledge is no exception to this rule. Accordingly, Drake, the leading Critical Realist, observes: 'In so far, however, as we cease turning the opera-glass upon our own minds, and just sink into the momentary feeling, we cease knowing our mental states, we just are mental states.'¹ In fact, to live or to 'enjoy' mental states is to *be* those states and not, as Alexander holds, to *know* them. So self-knowledge, in the view of Alexander, may be said at best to give an indication of the nature of the self's *being*, but cannot have the sense of the *knowing* of it. By holding that self-knowledge is direct and immediate, Alexander, of course, avoids those difficulties to which philosophers like the Critical Realists expose themselves as a result of their understanding this knowledge in terms of representationism. But he thereby cuts the ground from underneath his feet by making self-knowledge lose the sense of *knowing*.

The fact is that empirical knowledge, no matter whether it is held to be direct and immediate or indirect and mediate, necessarily involves

¹ Drake and others, *Essays in Critical Realism*, p. 31.

two distinct terms, the subject and the object. But Alexander in his anxiety to recognize the directness and immediacy of self-knowledge has reduced it to a single term. He has done this presumably on the erroneous assumption that knowledge cannot be direct and immediate except in so far as it has one term instead of two distinct ones. Nevertheless, his position goes to suggest the truth that what is usually called self-knowledge is found to involve not more than one term. But this truth inevitably leads to another one which Alexander misses, viz., that that which is ordinarily regarded as self-knowledge has no sense of knowledge at all. However that may be, if Alexander has failed to vindicate self-knowledge, the Critical Realists cannot be said to have succeeded in doing so by means of their view that this knowledge, like outer knowledge, involves not one but two distinct terms. For to the question what those two terms are, which are respectively to be regarded as the subject and the object in self-knowledge, the Critical Realists seem to have no reply except that one and the same mental act is at once both the subject and the object, the former being the mental act itself and the latter the appearance of it. But this position is no less absurd than that of Alexander which consists in stating that the so-called self-knowledge involves one term only and yet is a form of knowledge proper.

It follows then that self-knowledge cannot bear the sense of knowledge regarded as apprehension of something as an *object*. When Moore refers to the 'diaphaneity' of the mental act, he seems to have in view the real difficulty about what usually passes for self-knowledge. But he leaves the difficulty where it is, without making any attempt to show whether it can be removed, and, if so, how. Broad has, however, tried to show how it is possible for us to apprehend our mental acts. According to him, just as we can have a direct and non-inferential knowledge of the relating relation of 'between' when a pattern of three dots in a line is presented to our inspection, so we may be said to apprehend a mental act in so far as we have a direct and non-inferential knowledge of the relating relation involved in a 'complex' like 'sensing a noise', 'feeling a tooth-ache', etc.¹

Now, if the so-called mental act is something, and not nothing, it should be, as Broad says, a 'relating relation', and not an entity nor a quality. And since a relation there cannot be except in so far as there

¹ *Vide* C. D. Broad, *The Mind and its Place in Nature*, pp. 308-9.

are two or more terms between which it can be said to subsist, the so-called mental act regarded as a relation should naturally be spoken of, as he speaks of it, as an element in a 'complex'. But he is required to tell us what the terms are within the complex, in which the sensing of a noise or the feeling of a tooth-ache is a relating relation. And his reply can obviously be only this, that in the case of our sensing a noise there is only one term, viz., 'noise', in the case of our feeling a tooth-ache there is similarly only one term, viz., 'tooth-ache', and so on. That being so, he has no justification for calling a mental act like 'sensing a noise' or 'feeling a tooth-ache' a relating relation.

The fact, however, is that the so-called mental act, as Broad holds, is really a relating relation. But, as we have previously seen, as a relation, it is unique in that one of its terms is invariably the self or mind. So the 'complex', in which a mental act, say, sensing a noise, is an element, consists of two terms, one of which is the mind that senses and the other the noise that is sensed. Now, in this situation what can be said to be *known* is the noise. And the *knowing* of the noise is, in usual terminology, a mental act. That being so, to ask how we know the mental act is to ask how we *know* the knowing—a question which obviously admits of infinite regress without having to stop to receive an answer. Hence the absurdity of the problem of the knowledge of the so-called mental act. This is precisely the reason why Kant and many philosophers since his time have found the problem of self-knowledge perplexing, and felt insuperable difficulties in dealing with it. Moore's reference to the 'diaphaneity' of mental acts is but an indication of the insolubility of this problem. Even Broad comes to realize that outer knowledge is more obviously a fact and less open to difficulty than self-knowledge. He confesses: 'I cannot, of course, prove that we have knowledge of such situations as sensing a noise or feeling a tooth-ache, besides inspective knowledge of the noise or tooth-ache itself.'

What follows then is that self-knowledge in the sense of the apprehension of the so-called mental acts is only a word without meaning, no matter whether it is held to be direct and immediate or indirect and mediate. But even supposing that we do know our mental acts, why should that knowledge be called self-knowledge? The so-called mental act is not an entity that can be regarded as a constituent of the mind; nor is it a quality ascribable to it. It is, as some of the

realists of recent times have held, a relation which, as previously seen, subsists between two terms, one of which must be the mind and the other something presented to it. That being so, the supposed knowledge of a mental act should obviously be the knowledge of the relation between the self and the not-self, which cannot be held to be self-knowledge rather than outer knowledge. But, then, self-knowledge, in the sense in which it is often understood, viz., as the self's apprehension of itself as an object, is sheer nonsense, because, as we have observed time and again, the self's being at once two distinct terms, the subject and the object, is a plain absurdity.

The conclusion following from the above discussion, however, is not that we have no means of admitting any such thing as the self or of affirming its existence. The fact is that the self, as we have come to realize on many occasions, is just the thing whose existence needs to be affirmed by a means different from empirical knowledge which is essentially object-consciousness. And the means in demand is transcendental awareness which is the pure I-consciousness logically implied by the empirical knowledge of outer objects. This position has already been argued in our essay on 'Whither Consciousness?' and will be further developed in our essay on 'What, then, is Philosophy?'.

V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

If it is held, as is done by the realists of recent times, that the immediate object of our sense-experience is no part of the *common* world of physical things, but something else, viz., the so-called sense-data, then the commonness and independent reality of this world would once for all be left out of account. For, sense-data being *ex hypothesi* physically and physiologically determined and, consequently, being characterized by contingency and privacy, the world constructed or known from them should naturally be similarly characterized. The more fundamental difficulty would, however, be that, our sense-experience being immediately confined to sense-data, we would have no idea of the common world of physical things nor any means of recognizing the sense-data as contingent and private, with the result that we would have no option but to rest content with the mere apprehension of sense-

data. In any case, the doctrine of sense-data serves to confirm, instead of being a remedy for, the most objectionable aspect of the idealist view of the physical world, which consists in the reduction of this world to a contingent status. Its only merit lies in its obviating the mentalistic interpretation of the physical world which is bound up with idealism. But even then, it conveys no sense of a refutation of this aspect of idealism which was a major item in the recent realists' programme of philosophical reform. At best, it is an exception and an alternative to the 'theory of ideas' on which idealism is directly based.

The remedy for the twofold difficulty of idealism indicated above, however, lies in the return to that common-sense view which holds that the immediate objects of our sense-experience are, as the realists of recent times generally hold, non-mental, and not, as idealism declares, mental; and that, *normally* (that is, in so far as our sense-experience is true as it is more often than not), they are the common independently existing physical things, and not the so-called sense-data. Of course, we are sometimes victims of illusion, hallucination and dream. But the objects of our experience in these cases are *mere* appearances (not appearances *of* things), the status of which, unlike that of the objects of our veridical perception, is metaphysically indeterminate and indeterminable. This is precisely the reason why it does not behove the philosopher to mix up the objects of our illusory, hallucinatory and dream experiences with those of our veridical perception or perceptual knowledge proper lest he should have to hold that both are sense-data of the same kind and thereby to make an absurd problem break out within perceptual knowledge—the problem how the common world of physical things is to be constructed or known from sense-data. Thus is indicated how philosophers old and new, including the realists of recent times, have generally come to miss the truth that the common world of physical things may directly and immediately present itself to the perceiving mind as an *accomplished fact*, and that no problem arises in connection with our perceptual experience except in so far as this experience turns out to be a negation of perceptual knowledge in the shape of illusion, hallucination and dream, instead of being perceptual knowledge as such.

In the understanding of the nature of perceptual knowledge the question of the nature of perceiving is, however, no less important than that of the immediate object of perceptual experience. In fact, while no

epistemological problem worth the name can really arise in so far as we *know* the physical world through the means which is alone appropriate to our knowledge of it, viz., perceptual experience, any manner of the misunderstanding of the nature of perceiving converts this knowledge to the subject of a problem. In particular, the view of perceiving as, ultimately, a conditional phenomenon or a quality or a process or an act of the mind obviously contradicts the possibility of the perceiving mind's transcendence to, or direct contact with, outer objects, and thereby gives rise to the absurd problem referred to above, viz., how the common world of physical things is to be constructed or known in an indirect manner. In order that perceptual knowledge may be extricated from the difficulty of this problem it is, therefore, necessary to remove these misconceptions about perceiving and to understand its true nature.

Now, there is no gainsaying the fact that there can be no perceptual situation where no stimulus is delivered, and the perceiving mind does not react to it. Such reaction on the part of the perceiving mind is, of course, conditional. But then, perceiving as a way of knowing is not *reacting* to a stimulus, but *owning* the source of the stimulus as an *object*. And this means that perceptual knowledge, with which epistemology is concerned, transcends the process of reaction to the stimulus without having to pass through any other process of its kind, and so is in itself unconditional. In this connection it is of interest to remember that Kant, who for the first time in the history of philosophy discovered that perceptual knowledge is above *mechanical* determination, came, in the end, to miss the full significance of this discovery in so far as he held that this knowledge, in the final analysis, is subject to *transcendental* determination. It is, however, curious that Kant should have thus advocated epistemological determinism, while keeping himself free from ethical determinism by conceiving of the moral consciousness of the human mind as spontaneous or unconditional. Of course, there is, as Kant held, a fundamental difference between moral and cognitive consciousness. Nevertheless, cognitive consciousness is no more a mere natural phenomenon than moral consciousness. Both are alike concerns of the human mind and, as such, are equally in a class apart from mere natural phenomena. That being so, as in the understanding of moral consciousness, so in that of cognitive consciousness the concept of causality should, in every form, be inapplicable, and the latter

should, like the former, be held to be spontaneous or unconditional, and not, as Kant held, subject to transcendental determination. Viewed in this light, cognitive consciousness would obviously be contradictory to the Kantian doctrine of the unknowability of things-in-themselves, and would demand the thesis that our perceptual knowledge consists in the direct and immediate revelation of things-in-themselves to ourselves as percipients, and that like our moral obligation to our fellow-men it does not admit of any manner of causal interpretation, but can only be affirmed or accepted as an ultimate datum.

Failing to realize the unconditionality of perceptual knowledge and, consequently, losing sight of the above thesis, as they have generally done, the epistemologists have been left with no legitimate means of vindicating the commonness and independent reality of the physical world. Of the illegitimate means intended to fulfil this end, the most significant is, however, the one that has been adopted by the American New Realists. These philosophers seem to have felt that the greatest hindrance to a satisfactory understanding of the nature of perceptual knowledge is the traditional belief, according to which mind and consciousness including perceiving are not only of the nature of *existence* but ultimately real. Accordingly, they have come to deny independent reality or separate existence to perceiving with a view to vindicating the objective reality of the physical world. In this they seem to have been guided by the spirit in which the American philosopher and psychologist, William James, had raised the challenging question: 'Does consciousness exist?' William James denied consciousness the status of separate existence, and thereby displayed sufficient common sense and considerable philosophical insight. But he stopped there and failed to realize, as his successors, the American New Realists, have also done, that consciousness, especially perceiving, is not mere nothing but an actual fact bearing the sense of an *external relation*, precisely the sense that is demanded by the unconditionality of perceptual knowledge.

Now, perceiving regarded as a relation is unique. One aspect of its uniqueness lies in the fact that, unlike the commonly known relations, say, the spatial and the temporal, it invariably has a mind or a self as one of its terms. But, then, it should not be forgotten that, like them, it is *external*, not internal. From this point of view it would obviously be arbitrary and unwarrantable to hold, as idealism does, that the object

of perceptual knowledge belongs to, or depends for its existence upon, the perceiving mind. Of course, it would be equally improper to resort to that materialistic theory which seeks to deduce mind and consciousness from matter, or to uphold any form of neutralism which exorcises the ultimate reality of both mind and the physical world.

The second aspect of the uniqueness of perceiving as a relation follows from the first, and consists in a phenomenon, the parallel of which is not presented by any other kind of relation, viz., the perceiving mind's transcendence to, or direct and immediate contact with, an outer object and the latter's revelation of itself to the former. This phenomenon is well expressed by the current epistemological term 'compresence'. But the realists of recent times, who are specially responsible for the popularization of this term, have failed to realize that the relation of the perceiving mind to the object perceived is, in a sense, unconditional, or, in other words, takes place spontaneously, and not merely because of any event or process that is chronologically prior to it. And in this they have simply missed the truth that perceptual knowledge as such does not admit of any manner of causal interpretation, and that the object of this knowledge is an independently existing physical thing, and not the effect or effects produced by it. It is on this account that they, like many other philosophers, ancient and modern, are unaware of the true meaning of 'compresence'. But once it is realized that the cognitive relation involved in perceptual knowledge is unconditional, the old theory of 'ideas', which really owes its origin to the purely a priori and empirically unverifiable doctrine of dualism of mind and matter, and the recent theory of sense-data, which has been wrongly deduced by its advocates from the consideration of the phenomena of relativity of sense-experience and those of illusion, hallucination and dream, would appear in their true perspective as being arbitrary and illegitimate. And, consequently, no doubt would be left about the fact that perceptual knowledge consists in the percipient's direct and immediate apprehension of outer things themselves, which is precisely the meaning of the term 'compresence'.

The vindication of the independent reality of the physical world is not, however, the only result to follow from the view of perceiving as, in a sense, unconditional and as pointing to the purely relational character of perceptual knowledge. In fact, this view would bear upon the understanding of the self or the mind differently from the ordinary

view which holds that perceiving is a contingent phenomenon and an act or a process of the mind. On the latter view, the self should naturally be understood in terms of the passing mental processes including perceiving, with the result that it would come to be viewed not as an independent reality but as a mere aggregate of contingent mental phenomena devoid of unity and continuity, the characteristics that are essential to it. If this absurd position be avoided through the admission of the soul, over and above the so-called mental processes, the consequence would be the revival of the old difficulties of the Cartesian conception of the self. But the situation would change most favourably for the proper understanding of the self when perceiving is held merely to point to a relation between two distinct terms, the self and an outer object. For, in this view, there can arise no question of the understanding of the self in terms of perceiving and other processes of its kind, so that the risk of its being reduced to a contingent status or of its being denied the characteristics of unity and continuity would be reduced, if not altogether eliminated.

The relational view of perceiving would go further to bear upon the problem of self-knowledge, but only to liquidate it in so far as this knowledge is taken to mean apprehension of the so-called mental acts including perceiving. For, on this view, to apprehend perceiving is to apprehend the relation *between* the perceiving self and the outer object perceived, which can no more have the sense of self-knowledge than that of outer knowledge. To understand self-knowledge in the sense of the self's apprehension of itself as an object would, however, amount to holding the absurd view that one and the same thing, viz., the self, is both itself and, as object of its knowledge, something other than itself. Nevertheless, the self is not unknown and unknowable any more than it is known and knowable. The fact is that the question of knowability or unknowability is irrelevant in the case of the self, and that the existence of the self comes to be affirmed not on the ground that it is known to itself as an object but because it is the necessary presupposition of empirical knowledge or object-consciousness which is naturally outer. And this means that self-knowledge, strictly speaking, is transcendental awareness or pure I-consciousness.

Part Two

OUR KNOWLEDGE
OF THE
EXTERNAL WORLD

I

INTRODUCTION

THE unique peculiarity of our knowledge of the external world may first be stated as follows. Although we affirm the existence of our selves just as we affirm the existence of physical things, and our affirmation in either case may be called a cognitive judgment, yet, as we have argued in our essays on 'Whither Consciousness?' and 'The Doctrine of Inner Sense', we cannot be said to have knowledge of our selves in the same sense or in the same manner as we have knowledge of physical things, viz., as *objects*. This reveals the truth that inner knowledge regarded as something co-ordinate with, and parallel to, outer knowledge is a fiction, and that empirical knowledge as such is outer, consisting in the self's apprehension of things other than, and external to, itself, that is, things which make up the external world.

The failure to realize this truth has culminated, on the one hand, in the well-known and widely current doctrine of the empirical self, according to which the self, like physical things, is known as an object, and, on the other, in idealism, the theory which presents our knowledge of the external world as nothing short of a fiction by reducing it to a kind of inner apprehension on our part. Indeed, idealism marks the highest point of absurdity that philosophy could reach in its treatment of the problem of our knowledge of the external world. What is most curious, however, is that even when it has tried to steer clear of idealism, philosophy has seldom solved this problem in due consideration of the dictates of common sense and unaffected by the misleading influence of idealism. In fact, most of the so-called non-idealistic theories of our knowledge of the external world are at best compromises between idealism and common sense. This circumstance is, perhaps, due to the fact that philosophy is naturally so sophisticated that it often remains a stranger to simple truths or at least cannot accept any truth as a whole as easily as common sense does. In any case, it seems that in the domain of philosophy in particular, fictions once

created die hard, making it difficult for truths to prevail over them. However that may be, our object in this essay is to make an enquiry into the problem of our knowledge of the external world, and with that object in view we may begin with a statement of the position of common sense with regard to this problem.

II

THE COMMON-SENSE VIEW OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

ONE of the outstanding features of common sense lies in its view of the world of our day-to-day knowledge as independent of, and externally related to, ourselves as knowers. As regards the physical world, common sense holds that it is not only numerically distinct from, but also qualitatively dissimilar to, the mind. But it seems far from common sense to treat the mind and the physical world as mutually exclusive so as to preclude the possibility of any direct relation between the two, whether cognitive or otherwise. Regarding the cognitive relation in particular, common sense holds that it is precisely a relation which establishes a direct contact between the mind and what is qualitatively dissimilar to it, viz., physical things. How the cognitive relation takes place is, however, a question with which common sense is not at all concerned. And this means that the idea of understanding our knowledge of things in terms of the principle of causality is foreign to common sense, and that the cognitive relation is taken by it to be an ultimate datum. This brings us to the second characteristic of the common-sense view of our knowledge of the external world, which may be stated as follows.

Once it is realized that the cognitive relation is non-causal, there is no getting away from admitting that perceptual knowledge involves no activity or creativity, whether on the part of the perceiving mind or on that of the thing perceived. Of course, it cannot be denied, nor does common sense need to deny, that certain changes must occur on the side of the mind as well as on the side of external objects in order that the former's knowledge of the latter may take place. But such changes, as common sense believes, constitute a mere *occasion* for the arousal of perceptual knowledge, and should on no account be regarded as deter-

minants of the latter. Strictly speaking, my perceptual knowledge of an external object, say, a table, involves two things: my transcending, as it were, to the table, and the table's revealing itself to me. Both the things are obviously such that no light can be thrown on them by anything that happens on my side or on the side of the table prior to the occurrence of my knowledge of the table. This is precisely the reason why common sense, which is concerned not with the origin of perceptual knowledge but with its essential nature, does not recognize any such thing as the action of external objects on the mind, implying the latter's receptivity, or the possibility of the mind's evolving anything out of itself in virtue of its supposed creativity. Nor again does it favour the admission of the mind's joint capacity for both receiving and creating, which obviously implies the view of knowing as interpreting. In fact, the views of perceiving as receiving, creating or interpreting are based on the arbitrary assumption that the cognitive relation is causal. Hence common sense seems to be justified in holding, in place of these views of perceiving, the one that is alone consistent with its view of the cognitive relation as non-causal, viz., that perceptual knowledge involves transcendence on the part of the perceiving mind and self-revelation on the part of the thing perceived.

But the cognitive relation, though, as seen above, bipolar and external, is yet in a class apart from other kinds of external relation, especially those that are commonly recognized as external, viz., the spatial and the temporal. Of course, the thing perceived and the perceiving mind are not one and the same but separate from each other. And this means that the cognitive relation is external. Since, however, this relation does not consist in the mere juxtaposition of the mind that perceives and the thing that is to be perceived, but means the former's knowing the latter and the latter's being known to the former, it must be said to involve an additional element—an element which is absent in, and differentiates it from, other kinds of external relation. This additional element may be called 'compresence', meaning the togetherness of the perceiving mind and the thing perceived, as it were, at one point of space and at one moment of time. It should, however, be borne in mind that 'compresence' in this sense is the same as the non-causal phenomenon of the mind's transcendence to the thing to be perceived returned by the self-revelation of the latter to the former.

The admission of the transcendence-revelation bimodality of the cognitive relation, however, brings to light a third characteristic of the common-sense view of our knowledge of the external world, which consists in stating that our perceptual knowledge is direct and immediate, that things as known to us are identical with what they are in themselves. Since my knowing a thing, as common sense holds, is my transcending to it returned by the revelation of its identity to me, there is no getting away from admitting that that which I know is the thing in itself. In fact, I cannot be said to know a thing if that which I know is not that thing itself but something else instead. If to know a thing were the same thing as to know something else than that thing itself, error would be an inalienable feature of all our perceptual experience, and yet we would have no means of knowing that this is so. Hence an absurdity for which there seems to be no remedy except the common-sense view which holds that our perceptual knowledge consists in our direct and immediate apprehension of things in themselves.

Strictly speaking, common sense, in so far as it affirms the directness and immediacy of our knowledge of things in themselves, is theoretically unassailable. For the thing as known cannot, from the purely theoretical point of view, be held to be distinct from the thing in itself without committing either of two mistakes: (i) to employ, of course, arbitrarily, the concept of causality in the understanding of perceptual knowledge and, consequently, to regard perceiving as receiving, creating or interpreting; (ii) to misunderstand the dissimilarity between mind and the physical world as their mutual exclusiveness and then to account for the possibility of the cognitive relation in terms of the curious assumption that the direct and immediate object of perceptual experience is not anything non-mental, but something mental, viz., a manifold of sensations or 'ideas'.

But the theoretical justifiability of the directness and immediacy of perceptual knowledge seems to be rendered meaningless by the difficulty that is created by certain facts relating to perceptual experience. These facts come under two heads: (i) the phenomena of illusion, to which may be added those of hallucination and dream; (ii) the phenomena of relativity of sense-experience such as are illustrated in our perception of a thing as *round* under one set of circumstances and as *oval* under another. The question, however, arises whether the common-

sense view of perceptual knowledge as the direct and immediate revelation of things in themselves can hold good in the face of these empirical facts.

Now, as regards our hallucinations and dreams, so long as they endure, we do, of course, take their objects to be extra-mentally real. But this is of no consequence to the problem in hand. What really matters is the fact that our hallucinations and dreams are short-lived, and that we pass on sooner or later from them to the normal state of day-to-day life, that is, the state of waking consciousness. But when this happens, what we come to realize is not that the objects of our hallucinations and dreams are distinct from things in themselves, corresponding to them, but that they are purely private, corresponding to nothing in the extra-mental world. This obviously means that hallucinations and dreams are not cases of perceptual knowledge at all, and, consequently, that the consideration of these phenomena is irrelevant to the understanding of the nature of this knowledge. That being so, the phenomena of hallucination and dream cannot be taken to contradict the validity of the common-sense view about perceptual knowledge which holds that it consists in the direct and immediate revelation of things in themselves.

The phenomena of illusion do not, however, seem to admit of disposal in the same simple manner as those of hallucination and dream. The reason is that in the case of the former, unlike in the case of the latter, independently existing things are there, corresponding to the objects actually perceived. In fact, this point of difference of illusory perception from hallucination and dream indicates a point of its agreement with veridical perception or perceptual knowledge proper. The agreement lies in that both illusory and veridical perceptions are connected with independently existing things. That being so, the question arises whether, on the basis of this agreement between them, it can be held as against common sense, as has sometimes been done by philosophers, that in the case of veridical perception the thing as perceived is distinct from the thing in itself, just as this is undoubtedly so in the case of illusory perception.

The reply should be in the negative, for the following reason. As we have previously argued, the presence of, and the exercise of mechanical influence by, an independently existing thing or things, though a necessary pre-requisite of the possibility of perceptual knowledge,

constitute only an occasion for, but do not guarantee, the occurrence of perceptual knowledge. This means that perceptual knowledge is in a sense *sui generis*, and does not admit of being understood in terms of mechanical causation. In fact, sense-perception develops into perceptual knowledge by rising from a lower level of mechanical causation, where the independently existing thing functions only as a cause, to a higher level where the same independently existing thing ceases to be a *cause* and becomes an *object* to a subject or a knowing mind. There may arise an illusion or a mere show of knowledge instead of knowledge itself when sense-perception is somehow prevented from rising higher, and is forced to remain fixed at the lower level with an object which, obviously, cannot be an independently existing thing itself, but is only an effect produced by it in conjunction with the psycho-physiological adjunct of the knowing mind. That illusory perception is in a class apart from, and has no sense of, perceptual knowledge—which is thus brought out by the consideration of how they respectively take place—is, however, a truth which, as we shall immediately see, is revealed equally clearly by the consideration of the possibility of our recognition of the erroneous character of our illusory perception.

So long as an illusory perception is not recognized as illusory, its object, of course, passes for an independently existing thing. And had it been a fact that the so-called illusory perception is never recognizable as illusory, we would have had no means of knowing that we ever perceive a thing as something different from what it is in itself, and, consequently, no dispute would have arisen about the validity of the common-sense view which holds that the direct and immediate object of our perceptual knowledge is nothing but an independently existing thing. But this is really immaterial. What matters is the recognizability of illusory perception as illusory, which is evidenced by the fact that we do at least sometimes, if not always, detect the illusoriness of the phenomena of illusion.

Now, the recognition of the illusory character of an illusory perception cannot obviously be possible except in the light of the discovery that in its case the perceived object is something different from the thing that is there. It, therefore, involves, on the one hand, the perceptual knowledge of the thing itself, the thing that is there, and shows, on the other, that the illusory object is private and lacks independent reality. Two things are thus conclusively established. First, despite the

fact that in the case of illusory perception, unlike in that of hallucination and dream, something is there and delivers a stimulus, the former, like the latter two, has no sense of perceptual knowledge, and hence is of no consequence to the understanding of our knowledge of the external world. Second, the phenomena of illusion, on account of the fact that their illusoriness is detected only in the light of the knowledge of things that are there, serve to confirm, instead of contradicting, the common-sense view that perceptual knowledge consists in the direct and immediate revelation to the mind of things in themselves.

But there still remains a difficulty, in fact, the most formidable one that common sense has to face in connection with its view that the direct and immediate objects of perceptual knowledge are independently existing physical things. This difficulty relates to the phenomena of relativity of sense-experience, and consists in stating that our sense-experience is determined by physical and physiological factors, varying in the case of different perceiving minds, and from occasion to occasion in the case of one and the same perceiving mind, so that the immediate objects of our perceptual knowledge should be varying appearances of things, and not, as common sense holds, things in themselves.

About the above position it would perhaps not be going far from truth to say that it is *prima facie* absurd. The view that the immediate object of our perception is an appearance would obviously leave us with no means of ascertaining that that which we immediately perceive is an appearance, and that there is a thing in itself of which it is an appearance. Of course, it may be replied that we can know the thing in itself, and that we do so not by means of sense-perception but in a non-sensuous manner. But this would amount to admitting the absurd view that we know the external world by a means other than that which is admittedly the only suitable one, viz., sense-perception. Moreover, sense-perception and the supposed non-sensuous means of knowledge being obviously mutually exclusive, and there being no common ground between them, the object of the former, viz., appearance, must be absolutely disparate from the object of the latter, viz., the thing in itself. In consequence, we would have no means of recognizing an appearance as related to a particular thing in itself, nor could we be prevented from assigning any appearance to any thing in itself that we might choose.

Further, once it is held that sense-perception is ultimately determined by variable physical and physiological factors, there is no getting away from admitting that that which we immediately apprehend is contingent and private. In consequence, there would arise the difficult problem: how from the contingent and private data of perceptual experience we could at all know what is diametrically opposed to it in nature, viz., the thing in itself which is common to us all. The difficulty of this problem would, however, increase further, if it were held, as has sometimes been done by philosophers, that the immediate data of sense-perception are mental, besides being contingent and private. For in that case there would arise the fresh difficulty as to how we could know the non-mental physical world from that which is mental. But the original problem would remain with all its difficulties even if it were successfully shown that the immediate data of sense are non-mental, nay, physical, and yet it were held that the perceptual experience is, ultimately, conditional. This is a consideration which has been lost sight of by the realists of recent times in so far as they have controverted Berkeley's view of the immediate data of sense as mental, but have accepted, instead of having disputed, his view of them as contingent and private.

In fact, the question whether the immediate data of sense are private or common, contingent or independent is of more fundamental importance in epistemology than the question whether it is ultimately mental or non-mental. For those philosophers who argue the mental character of the physical world on the epistemological ground generally base themselves on the consideration of the physical and physiological conditionality of sense-perception, yielding the view that the immediate data of sense are contingent and private. And the fact also is that from the admission of the physical and especially the physiological conditionality of the immediate data of sense it is but a natural step, though not an inevitable one, to the mind-dependence of the same. That being so, any attempt to refute idealism should only be shooting beside the mark, if it is not based on the realization of the truth that the immediate object of perceptual knowledge is something independent and common, not anything dependent upon the physical and physiological factors involved in sense-perception, or upon the perceiving mind.

What has been said above, however, aims merely at the defence, but cannot have the sense of the logical proof, of the common-sense thesis

that we are capable of knowing things in themselves directly and immediately, and that we do so by means of sense-perception, and sense-perception only. The reason is that this thesis is after all a mere statement of fact, and that facts are naturally independent of logic, and hence do not admit of logical proof, though for the same reason they cannot be logically disproved either. But the same consideration of the impossibility of logical proof or disproof would apply equally well in the case of any statement supposed to be a statement of fact, and having the sense of opposition to this thesis of common sense. That being so, a conflict may arise, and, in fact, is generally there, between the present thesis of common sense and its antithesis—a conflict which is logically irresolvable. Nevertheless, in order that it may not be a battle-field of conflicting opinions, philosophy can ill afford to withhold its decision on an issue of vital importance such as the one just before us, but should try to resolve it by employing a criterion other than the strictly logical one.

Now, the criterion in demand should naturally be concerned with the consideration of the fruitfulness or otherwise of the two conflicting alternatives. And judged by such a criterion, the alternative opposed to that which is adopted by common sense will be found to be unsound and hence unworthy of our choice. For the denial of the common-sense thesis under consideration is tantamount to the dismissal of the objective validity of perceptual knowledge, or else, when its objective validity is accounted for in some such manner as that of Kant, it involves the exclusion of things in themselves from the scope of perceptual knowledge. But in either case the consequence that would follow is, obviously, the logically irrefutable but philosophically barren position known as scepticism.

The question which then remains is whether scepticism, which philosophy is in need of avoiding, can be avoided by it otherwise than by having recourse to common sense. The answer should be in the negative for the following reason. Any attempt to overcome scepticism—whether in the form of the doctrine of the conditionality and relativity of sense-experience in general, or in that of the doctrine of appearance in particular—if it is divorced from common sense, would obviously prove self-stultifying by yielding a view of the world which is bizarre and unfamiliar to all except the few philosophers who are its advocates. Ample testimony to the truth of this remark is provided by

the outcome of Plato's attack upon the Protagorean doctrine of the relativity of sense-experience and that of the realists of recent times upon Berkeleyan idealism, as well as by Hegel's attempt to improve upon Kant's doctrine of appearance.

It needs to be added, however, that the denial of the objective validity of perceptual knowledge or the exclusion of things in themselves from its immediate grasp, when it is empirically argued, is so done by means of an undue exaggeration of the so-called relativity of our sense-experience. But it is curious that in their understanding of perceptual knowledge philosophers should at all make fuss about the phenomena of relativity of sense-experience, while the fact stands out that our day-to-day dealings with the world are not ordinarily affected by them in a serious manner. To attach undue importance to the relativity of sense-experience is, however, to hold that perceptual experience as such is of the nature of false perception, and, consequently, that in the case of the so-called veridical perception or perceptual knowledge, as in that of false perception, the thing as perceived is distinct from, not identical with, the thing in itself. And that is how philosophers have found themselves in a position to dispute the validity of the common-sense view that perceptual knowledge consists in the direct and immediate revelation of things in themselves. But in this procedure they have little thought that perception affected by relativity cannot unequivocally be regarded as of the same nature as false perception, because, as we shall see below, they differ in kind and not merely in degree.

Supposing that there is an element of error in perception affected by relativity as well as in false perception, there is no denying the fact that it is too large in the latter, whereas it is too small in the former. And this difference is not one of mere degree. For, in the case of perception affected by relativity, whatever measure of error there is exists alongside of perceptual knowledge, and leaves the latter more or less unaffected; so that it is negligible, far from being surprising. In the case of false perception, on the other hand, error takes the place of perceptual knowledge, and if perceptual knowledge subsequently comes to prevail over it, it is found to be surprising. Hence it is evident that the difference between perception affected by relativity and false perception is ultimately one of kind, and that the former yields whatever knowledge of outer objects we human beings can attain to, whereas the

latter is the negation of such knowledge. So there is hardly any justification for the treatment of the phenomena of relativity of sense-perception as a basis of the empirical argument against the common-sense belief in the directness and immediacy of our perceptual knowledge of things in themselves.

III

THE IDEALISTIC VIEW OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

WE have now to set forth the main characteristics of epistemological idealism in contrast with those of the common-sense view of our knowledge of the external world which have been stated above. In this task we should naturally have the idealism of Berkeley specially in view, because he, though not the only philosopher to have advocated epistemological idealism, stands out in the history of Western philosophy as the most vigorous and the most uncompromising exponent of this theory.

It is true, strange though it seems, that in the field of philosophy, if nowhere else, extremes have a peculiar way of meeting at a common point. This holds good especially in the case of the two mutually opposed theories of knowledge with which we are now concerned. Thus Berkeley, while really undermining the foundation of the common-sense view of our knowledge of the external world, considers himself as a champion of that very view. The fact also is that he subscribes to the common-sense belief in the directness and immediacy of perceptual knowledge by holding, in common with the plain man, that everything *is* as it *seems* to be. Thereby, like the plain man, he also keeps himself free of the objectionable view of perceiving as interpreting.

But behind this apparent agreement between Berkeley and the plain man there is a fundamental difference between their respective interpretations of the proposition: 'everything is as it seems to be'. This difference relates primarily to their understanding of the bearing of a thing's seeming, or rather its being perceived, upon its being. According to the plain man, a thing exists not only when it is perceived but also when it remains unperceived, which obviously means that it exists

not because of, but in spite of, being perceived. Of course, we cannot affirm a thing's existence except in so far as we know it, and our knowledge of it takes place in virtue of perception. But that only shows that perception serves merely to reveal it to us, and not that it affects or determines its being as such. The proposition in question, then, as the plain man believes, is primarily *epistemological*, and conveys no *metaphysical* sense by way of offering any definition of the *being* of things perceived. But this is exactly what Berkeley repudiates. As against the plain man, he holds that this proposition has a metaphysical sense, by which he means that a thing's being is identical with its being perceived. Thus does Berkeley contradict common sense by affirming that a thing exists not in spite of, but because of, being perceived, and that that which is unperceived does not exist. In fact, Berkeley, while agreeing with the plain man in ascribing to sense-perception the epistemological function of revealing the so-called outer objects, does not, unlike the latter, regard this as its sole function, but holds that to sense-perception also belongs a metaphysical function, viz., that of holding, and setting limit to, the being of the objects revealed by itself. It is in consideration of this supposed metaphysical function of sense-perception that Berkeley finds himself in a position to affirm that the so-called outer objects are dependent, for their existence, upon sense-perception, and, consequently, upon mind, to which, according to him, sense-perception belongs as an activity. Hence Berkeley's view of the external world as mind-dependent as opposed to the common-sense view of it as independent of mind.

But even granted that outer objects are mind-dependent in the sense indicated above, it does not necessarily follow that they are, as according to Berkeley's mentalism they must be, mental in themselves. In fact, the conclusion that could, strictly speaking, be derived from the mere admission of the mind-dependence of external objects is that they are not *common*, but are, to each perceiving mind, *private*. Be it noted in this connection that it is not correct to say, as some of the realists of recent times, especially Moore, did at one time do, that Berkeley's mentalism is the result of his failure to recognize the object of sensing as separate from the act of sensing regarded as a mental phenomenon. The fact is that Berkeley was not unaware of their separateness, but held that the immediate objects of our sensing, though separate from our act of sensing, are our 'ideas' and hence are mental and not, as

common sense holds, non-mental. Nor can Berkeley be said to have derived his mentalism merely from the consideration of the relativity of sense-perception, though this consideration occupied an important place in his philosophical thought. For the consequence which one might deduce from this consideration—no matter whether or not one would be justified in doing that—is again not that the objects of sense-perception are mental, but that they are relative and private. And this, let us not forget, is exactly the line of thought which has been approved of, and actually adopted, by most of the realists of recent times. There is, however, no denying the fact that whatever is mental is private to some mind. But the converse does not seem to be necessarily true. So, in order that the objects of perception may be held to be mental, it would not be enough somehow to show merely that the materials which constitute them, or from which they are derived, are private, but it should further be shown that they are really mental. So the question arises whether Berkeley has fulfilled this additional demand in advocating mentalism.

In dealing with this question it is, however, necessary to bear in mind that Berkeley took to philosophizing not with a completely open mind but primarily with a view to vindicating spiritualism by refuting the metaphysical theory which is antithetical to it, viz., materialism. Now, the doctrine of material substance and the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, both of which Locke admitted under Cartesian influence, presented themselves to Berkeley as the foundation of materialism. Berkeley, therefore, addressed himself to the task of proving the falsity of these two Cartesian elements in the philosophy of Locke. But he performed this task, as we shall see below, mainly by falling back upon Locke's empirical theory of knowledge and arguing therefrom the untenability of the doctrine of material substance and of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities. And as the final result of this procedure he arrived at the view that things perceived by us are solely constituted by our 'ideas' and so are mental—exactly the view which he needed for the vindication of his spiritualistic standpoint.

As regards Berkeley's dismissal of the doctrine of material substance, it should, however, be observed that it was considerably facilitated by the modification which Locke had introduced into Descartes' formulation of that doctrine. Descartes had held that knowing, strictly speak-

ing, is thinking or conceiving. In consequence, he arrived at the view that for us the physical world is what we conceive it to be. And assuming that we conceive of it as matter or extended substance, he came to affirm that the physical world, as we, strictly speaking, know it, is material substance. Locke, on the other hand, held that knowing, in its strict sense, precludes thinking and consists primarily in sensing, which, according to him, consists in receiving sensations or 'ideas' produced in the mind by independently existing physical things. Curiously, however, Locke went further in stating that we cannot rest content with the view of physical things as mere combinations of our 'ideas', but are compelled to *think* of them as material substances, that is, as substrata of the immediate data of sense. Thus did Locke adhere to his empirical standpoint in so far as he held that knowing as such is complete in, and co-extensive with, sensing. But he resorted to Cartesianism in so far as he admitted the necessity of *thinking* over and above *knowing* regarded as identical with sensing, and thereby brought the notion of material substance to bear upon his view of the object of our perceptual knowledge as being constituted by our 'ideas'. As an inevitable result of the curious mixing up of empiricism and Cartesianism which Locke thus admitted, he was, however, left with the view that the material substance is unknown and unknowable, and yet is something which we cannot but think of and, therefore, admit.

But this position of Locke, which is but a modification of the Cartesian doctrine of material substance in the light of his own empirical standpoint, is really incompatible with that very standpoint. For, once he insisted, from this standpoint, on the supreme importance of sensing and ruled out the importance of thinking with regard to the possibility of our perceptual knowledge, Locke was precluded from recognizing any limitation of our sense-experience as well as from admitting an unknowable or, let us say, a hypothetical aspect of the object of our perceptual knowledge signified by his notion of material substance, as distinguished from its empirical aspect, the aspect in which it is constituted by our 'ideas'. It is precisely on the basis of a consideration like this that Berkeley, instead of adopting the doctrine of material substance and rejecting Locke's empirical standpoint, an alternative which he was quite at liberty to admit, adopted Locke's empirical standpoint and rejected the doctrine of material substance. In this, it is needless to point out, he was only cognisant of his own

convenience, which demanded a view of the physical world that could be derived from Locke's empirical standpoint, viz., mentalism, according to which physical things are mental, being made up of our 'ideas'.

Berkeley, who thus found out the inconsistency of Locke's admission of the doctrine of material substance alongside of his acceptance of the empirical theory of knowledge, would naturally come to regard the latter's admission of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities as all the more arbitrary. Not to speak of Locke's empirical standpoint alone, even his new notion of material substance could not warrant the admission of this distinction. For the material substance being, according to him, unknown and unknowable, he could obviously have no means of assuring himself, as he did, that our ideas of the so-called primary qualities like shape, size, etc., are realistic, or, in other words, are true copies of qualities inhering in material substances. Nor, for the same reason, could he be sure that our ideas of the so-called secondary qualities like colour, smell, etc., are purely subjective in the sense that material substances are devoid of qualities bearing these names.

The difficulty in the above form could not, however, arise in the case of Descartes, in so far as he admitted the distinction between primary and secondary qualities. According to him, to know the physical world is to conceive of it as material substance, and to do the latter is to think of it as characterized by the mathematical qualities, but not by the sensible ones. So Descartes could easily hold that our sense-perception is realistic in so far as it reveals the mathematical properties of physical things like shape, size, etc., and that it is purely subjective and devoid of any objective meaning in so far as it brings to light the sensible qualities like colour, smell, etc. But this position of Descartes, which consists in the peculiar understanding of physical things without reference to the so-called secondary qualities, and which, in fact, reduces the physical world to abstract mathematical objects, is obviously incompatible with the empirical standpoint which Locke advocated. It is precisely on a ground like this that Berkeley, who was indeed more faithful to Locke's empirical standpoint than Locke himself had been, dismissed the distinction between primary and secondary qualities. But, then, he corrected Locke's mistake, not by holding that our ideas of the so-called secondary qualities are as realistic as are our ideas of the primary qualities in the view of Locke, but by assigning to the primary

qualities the same status as Locke had assigned to the secondary qualities. As a result, Berkeley arrived at the view that the objects of our perceptual knowledge are in themselves mental, being made up of our 'ideas'. In this Berkeley, however, did nothing but to deduce the logical consequence of Locke's empirical theory of knowledge, according to which the immediate objects of sense are only ideas produced in our mind.

The idealism of Berkeley is thus a view of our knowledge of the external world which he derived from Locke's empirical theory of sense-perception in isolation from the Cartesian elements which were imposed upon it by Locke himself. So in examining, as we shall now proceed to do, Berkeley's epistemological theory, we have really to turn our critical eye to Locke's empirical theory of sense-perception which is its anchor-sheet.

Now, Locke, who professed to be an empiricist, belied his profession by uncritically advocating a theory of sense-perception which, far from being empirical, was really the corollary of an a priori metaphysical doctrine. On the view of Locke, our perceptual experience does not consist in our direct and immediate apprehension of physical things themselves, but in our reception of the 'ideas' produced in our mind by physical things. But why the immediate objects of sense should be such things as 'ideas' is, however, a question to which no satisfactory answer can be given by any philosopher, if he sticks to the strict empirical standpoint and keeps himself free of all metaphysical assumptions having anything directly or indirectly to do with the problem of our knowledge of the external world. For the answer we have really to refer to Descartes, who first introduced into the history of modern philosophy the view that the immediate objects of sense are ideas. But, so far as Descartes was concerned, he arrived at this view as an inevitable epistemological consequence of his purely a priori metaphysical doctrine known as dualism of mind and matter. Since mind and the physical world, according to this doctrine, are mutually exclusive, there cannot be any direct relation, cognitive or otherwise, between them. Quite arbitrarily, however, Descartes admitted the possibility of causal relation between the two, and therefrom arrived at the view that physical things can produce in our mind certain effects that are mental, and may appropriately be called 'ideas'. And then, on the understanding that the mind can easily be in direct relationship with its

ideas, he found himself in a position to hold that our empirical apprehension of physical things consists merely in our awareness of the ideas produced by them in our mind.

Descartes may, however, be excused for having propounded such a queer theory of sense-perception, in view of the fact that it was the only means of accounting for our empirical knowledge of the external world that he could adopt within the limits set by his dualistic metaphysics. But it cannot but be deplored that this theory has generally been taken for granted in the history of modern philosophy since the time of Descartes, and especially that it has been allowed even by those who have rejected its metaphysical foundation as spurious. In any case, Locke had no justification for advocating it, because it is plainly incompatible with the empirical standpoint in its strict sense, the standpoint which he wished to uphold. But Berkeley's fault in this respect was more serious, in view of the fact that he accepted this Cartesian theory of sense-perception, in spite of having dismissed the material substance, and having thereby dealt a death-blow to Cartesian dualism, which was its essential metaphysical foundation. In fact, as a result of his denial of the material substance, there remained for Berkeley nothing that he could call the independently existing physical world, and consequently he had nothing at his disposal which he could regard as the *natural* cause of our 'ideas'. So in admitting, as Berkeley still did, such things as 'ideas' in order to treat them as the immediate objects of sense, he clearly reduced himself to the absurd position which accepts the effects while dismissing their causes.

It should, however, be realized that since perceiving can by no stretch of imagination be regarded as a creative activity on the part of the mind, the 'ideas', which are said to be the immediate objects of sense-perception, must be held to be due to factors lying outside of the mind, viz., independently existing physical things. Hence the justification for Descartes' and Locke's admission of independently existing physical things and their view of them as the causes of our ideas. But, then, once it is held that what we are directly and immediately aware of in our sense-perception are our ideas, we cannot, strictly speaking, be said to have any means of knowing that our ideas are of the nature of effects, and of affirming that there are independently existing things to be regarded as the causes of our ideas. Hence also the justification for Berkeley's advocating mentalism, according to which there is no such

thing as an independently existing physical world, and the so-called external world is made up of our 'ideas'. Thus there arises a dilemma which is obviously such that it cannot be resolved except by means of the liquidation of the Cartesian-Lockean theory of sense-perception of which it is the offspring.

Now, Berkeley could have avoided the Cartesian-Lockean theory of sense-perception as well as the mentalistic theory of the physical world which he deduced therefrom, had he withheld the application of the concept of causality in his understanding of our knowledge of the external world instead of having done so in his understanding of self-knowledge. Of course, as we have seen very often in these essays, and especially in our essay on 'The Doctrine of Inner Sense', it is difficult, nay, impossible, to establish the causal view of self-knowledge, according to which in knowing our self what we directly and immediately apprehend is not our self itself but only 'ideas' produced in virtue of the action of our mental activities upon our inner sense. But, then, in understanding self-knowledge one can ill afford to ignore the consideration which the advocates of the causal conception of this knowledge seem to have in view, viz., that in all cases of knowledge, the so-called self-knowledge not excepted, the knower and the object known should naturally be numerically distinct. That being so, the non-causal view of self-knowledge, which states that the self knows itself, and does that directly and immediately, would, as we have not been tired of pointing out again and again, be absurd, and, in fact, no less so than the causal view of self-knowledge advocated by philosophers like Locke and Kant. If, then, anyone finds it necessary not to apply the concept of causality in the understanding of the nature of knowledge, and to hold instead that knowledge consists in the direct and immediate apprehension of a thing in itself, then the kind of knowledge which he may view in this manner should be our knowledge of the external world, not the so-called self-knowledge.

But just the opposite was Berkeley's position in this respect. On the one hand, he withheld the application of the concept of causality in his understanding of self-knowledge, which was unnecessary—unnecessary, because self-knowledge in the sense of the self's apprehension of itself as an object is an absurdity. And, on the other hand, he not only did not withhold the application of the concept of causality in his understanding of our knowledge of the external world, which would

have been just the appropriate thing to do, but left Locke's causal view of this knowledge unchallenged, nay, made use of it. This, undoubtedly, goes to show that it was far from Berkeley to realize the unjustifiability of the application of the concept of causality in the understanding of the nature of knowledge. Why he advocated the non-causal view of self-knowledge and yet turned the causal view of our knowledge of the external world to account, instead of dismissing it, is, however, to be explained thus. He thought that both these steps together are necessary for the vindication of the spiritualistic standpoint which he wished to uphold. The former, as he seems to have felt, could enable him to hold that the self is not made up of contingent and evanescent 'ideas', but is an independent spiritual substance. And in the latter he discovered an epistemological device by which he could bring the physical world over to the side of the mind, instead of having to view it as non-mental. Thus Berkeley's spiritualistic bias ultimately prevented him from entertaining the non-causal view of perceptual knowledge, according to which the immediate objects of sense-perception are independently existing physical things, and not mere modifications of the mind, viz., 'ideas' nor even any non-mental effect produced by them.

Berkeley's theory of perceptual knowledge, considered by itself and apart from the fact that it is derived from Locke's causal view of sense-perception, may, however, be said to be in a sense non-causal. For, strictly speaking, Berkeley as a mentalist is not entitled to the view that the 'ideas', which, according to him, are the immediate objects of sense, are effects produced by anything outside of the mind. Nor was Berkeley so lacking in common sense as to have held, as Leibniz may be said to have done, that the mind creates or rather evolves the ideas out of itself. On this interpretation, Berkeley's theory of perceptual knowledge may be said to consist merely in holding that the direct and immediate objects of our perceptual knowledge are ideas as such, just as the common-sense view of this knowledge consists in stating that these objects are independently existing physical things themselves. And this would imply that, as in the case of common sense no question should arise as to how independently existing physical things are immediately given in perceptual knowledge, so in the case of Berkeley it would be idle to raise a similar question with regard to the given-ness of 'ideas'. But, on this account, Berkeley must be said to be involved in solipsism from which common sense, obviously, is altogether free—

solipsism, the doctrine which holds that I, of course, with my ideas, alone exist.

Berkeley, however, realized this difficulty at a later stage in the development of his philosophy, and tried to find a remedy for it. But in devising the remedy he did not surrender the view of the immediate objects of sense as mere 'ideas', nor did he finally treat the 'ideas' as effects produced by a cause. What he actually did in this respect was to advocate what may be called a theological version of an aspect of Platonism, according to which our 'ideas' constituting the world of our perceptual knowledge are copies of the ideas present in the mind of God which constitute the so-called external world or the common world of us all. But once it is taken for granted, as it was done by Berkeley till the end, that the immediate objects of our sense-perception are our 'ideas', we can have no means of knowing that our ideas are copies of anything or that there are such things as divine ideas, of which our ideas are copies. This difficulty, it is needless to point out, is similar to that which Berkeley himself had felt about the view which holds not only that the immediate objects of our perceptual experience are our 'ideas', but also that our 'ideas' are effects produced by independently existing physical things. It seems, therefore, that Berkeley really had no way out of the solipsistic position to which he was inevitably committed as a consequence of his peculiar theory of sense-perception. However that may be, in so far as he held that the objects of our perceptual knowledge are ultimately our ideas, and that there is no such thing as the independently existing physical world, he had only one answer to give to the question about the origin of our 'ideas'. And that answer should be the same as that of Leibniz, viz., that all our ideas including the so-called adventitious ones are innate or are created or evolved by our mind out of itself.

On the above ground, Berkeley seems to be unavoidably committed to the view of perceiving as an act of creation in place of the view of it as an act of reception. And, consequently, he may be said to have missed the true sense of perceiving, viz., as a way of *knowing*, and to have put into it a meaning that is foreign to it, viz., a mode of *doing*. Of course, he might still put forward a claim to the recognition of the sense of perceiving as a way of knowing by stating that the ideas created by the mind are precisely the objects which the mind has to know, and that it actually knows them. But this would imply that

perceptual knowledge is a kind of inner apprehension, which it, evidently, is not, and that the cognitive relation involved in perceptual knowledge is purely internal, being the relation between the mind and its own modifications, viz., ideas, while the truth is that it is external, being the relation between mind and independently existing physical things. Berkeley's view of the cognitive relation as internal cannot, however, find justification even on the plea that it secures the relation of 'compresence' of the knowing mind and the object known, which is essential to perceptual knowledge. For this relation, notwithstanding the fact that it is unique and in a class apart from those which it is usual with us to regard as external, is yet external and not internal. We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that Berkeley's theory of perceptual knowledge has succeeded only in showing what this kind of knowledge is not rather than what it is.

IV

PERCEIVING AS INTERPRETING

IN the second section of this essay we have tried to show that to common sense belongs the credit of understanding perceptual knowledge in its true sense, viz., as direct and immediate apprehension of physical things themselves—of course, so far as it is possible for the human mind to attain such apprehension within the various kinds of limitation, intrinsic and extrinsic, to which it is subject. As a result, no doubt is perhaps left about the mistake of the view which holds that perceptual knowledge ultimately consists in the reception, on the part of the perceiving mind, of the effects produced by physical things. And, as we have argued in the third section, it would be equally wrong to hold that the objects of our perceptual knowledge are 'ideas' supposed to be created or evolved by the perceiving mind out of itself. But these two are not the only ways in which perceptual knowledge may be, or has been, understood in departure from the way in which common sense understands it. In their understanding of perceptual knowledge, philosophers have sometimes departed from common sense in another way also, viz., by means of a synthesis of the former two ways; and they have thereby arrived at the view of perceiving as interpreting. The peculiarity of this view is that, while it differs from the view of perceiving as mere receiving as well as from the view of it as mere creating, it denies neither, but holds that either by itself is one-sided, and that the complete understanding of the nature of perceptual knowledge would demand the integration of the two, resulting in the removal of the one-sidedness of the one by the other. The main considerations on which the view of perceiving as interpreting is based are, however, as follows.

It may be taken to be, and really it is, an unquestionable fact that a thing as perceived is *given* to, and not *created* by, the perceiving mind. Hence it is to be held that perceiving involves an act of reception on the part of the mind. But what is given for the mind to receive, it may

further be held, is not a thing itself, but the effect produced by it in conjunction with certain physical, physiological and even psychological factors. That being so, mere reception, it may be argued, and quite rightly, cannot constitute perceptual knowledge in its true sense, viz., as apprehension of an object that is there to have produced the effect in question, or, let us rather say, an object which could be called common or universal. Hence it is necessary to hold that perceptual knowledge cannot be complete in mere reception, but should involve an additional element. This element may be called activity on the part of the perceiving mind—activity, of course, not in the sense of pure creativity, but in that of a process that would manipulate the effects received by the perceiving mind so as to make them yield an object that is common or universal.

Since the view of perceiving as interpreting, as seen above, far from withholding the application of the concept of causality, makes a two-fold use of this concept by admitting both receiving and creating, it is, on this very account, untenable and unwarranted from the standpoint which we are trying to establish in these essays. But, then, it should not be forgotten that this view is after all an attempt to overcome the difficulty of, and to make an improvement upon, the view of perceiving as mere receiving as well as the view of it as mere creating, each based on the employment of the concept of causality. This calls for an independent enquiry into the question whether the view of perceiving as the joint process of both receiving and creating, to which the view of perceiving as interpreting amounts, can yield a satisfactory account of perceptual knowledge, which neither the view of perceiving as mere receiving nor the view of it as mere creating can provide if taken alone.

Now, on the view of perceiving as interpreting, the process of receiving yields only the immediate data of perceptual knowledge or rather the materials out of which the object of perceptual knowledge is to be constructed. But on this point there arise two serious difficulties. First, the materials, being *ex hypothesi* of the nature of effects produced under conditions that are obviously not fixed but really variable, are undoubtedly relative in character. That being so, any attempt to construct out of such materials the object of perceptual knowledge regarded as something common or universal, as we have argued in our essay on 'Sense-data, Perception and Self-knowledge', would be absurd. It is perhaps for this reason that many of those philosophers, who have

conceived of perceiving as a receptive process, have, like Protagoras of old, relegated perceptual knowledge to relativism and denied it objective validity.

The second difficulty depends upon how the nature of the immediate data of perceptual experience is understood, and applies specially in the case of those philosophers who hold that these data are non-physical, some regarding them as logical, that is, of the nature of subsistents; some as neutral, that is, neither physical nor mental; and some as definitely mental. The difficulty in question simply is that that which may be constructed out of, or known from, the materials conceived of in these manners cannot be *physical*, and in the first case cannot even be of the nature of *existence*, as the object of perceptual knowledge should naturally be.

It is, however, to be noticed that the advocates of the view of perceiving as interpreting, when they have laid themselves open to the second difficulty, have generally ignored it, and have taken cognisance of the first difficulty only. In consequence, they have persuaded themselves to believe that it is incumbent upon them to solve one problem only, viz., the problem of the objective validity of perceptual knowledge, or, in other words, that of the commonness or universality of the object of this knowledge. But really this can be the sole problem only in the case of those advocates of the view of perceiving as interpreting who conceive of the data of sense as physical, but not in the case of those who conceive of them as non-physical in one sense or another. However that may be, the main point in the attempted solution of this problem consists in the ascription to perceiving of the additional element of creating—creating, of course, in the sense which is compatible with the admission of receiving as an element in perception, viz., as manipulating the data of sense. Thus the view of perceiving as interpreting is governed by the idea that the data of sense can be so manipulated as to make them shed their original privacy and relativity and develop into the object of perceptual knowledge regarded as something common or universal.

Now, although the view of perceiving as interpreting is based on the admission of such things as the data of sense in distinction from the objects of perceptual knowledge properly so called, the latter does not necessarily lead to the former. Thus the Critical Realists headed by Drake, though they admit the doctrine of sense-data, cannot be said to

be advocates of the view of perceiving as interpreting. According to them, the object of perceptual knowledge is not anything constructed out of the immediate data of sense, but something to which the perceiving mind, as it were, transcends from these data. The epistemological position of the American New Realists headed by Holt is, however, peculiar. Advocates of an uncompromising objectivist standpoint as they are, they do not believe in any such thing as mind regarded as a separate and independent reality. And, accordingly, they hold that perceptual knowledge is a phenomenon that occurs on the purely biological or physiological level, and have nothing to do with the processes of receiving, creating and interpreting, which presuppose the separate reality of the mind. So it would not be proper to ascribe to these philosophers the view of perceiving as interpreting.

Of the philosophers who have regarded the immediate objects of sense as mental in terms of the view that they are sensations or 'ideas', Berkeley, for the reason explained in the previous section, should be said to have advocated the view of perceiving as creating rather than the view of it as interpreting or even receiving. But the others who share with Berkeley this view of the nature of the immediate objects of sense have generally differed from him by keeping themselves free from mentalism and the view of perceiving as creating. Nevertheless, instead of advocating the view of perceiving as interpreting, they have more often than not adopted an epistemological position similar to that of the Critical Realists mentioned above. This process of elimination is, however, inapplicable to Kant. Kant, notwithstanding the fact that he regarded the immediate objects of sense as mental, is one of the outstanding philosophers who have advocated the view of perceiving as interpreting. In fact, as we shall see later, he was the first to formulate, in clear terms, the epistemological problem, the solution of which demands the view of perceiving as interpreting. But Kant does not stand alone in his advocacy of this view of the nature of perceiving. The view of sense-data as physical and yet not identical with the 'common' world of physical things, which is one of the outstanding epistemological features of recent philosophy and an outcome of the attack, launched by the British realists headed by Moore, upon idealism, has, especially in the hands of Russell, developed into another form of the view of perceiving as interpreting.

Thus Kant among the older philosophers and the British Realists

like Russell among the philosophers of recent times may be regarded as the most prominent advocates of the view of perceiving as interpreting. But, while standing on this common footing, they differ on several points, two of which may be immediately noted. In the first place, Kant regards the objects of sense as mental, whereas Russell and his collaborators hold that they are, strictly, physical. Secondly, on Kant's view, interpreting involves the application of certain purely a priori principles to the data received by sensibility whereby is yielded the common or universal object of perceptual knowledge. Russell, on the other hand, holds that the common or universal objects, which, according to him, make up the world of physics, are the products of a process alleged to be empirical and to have nothing to do with any a priori principle—a process which he, curiously enough, calls 'logical construction'. In view of the latter difference between Kant and Russell, the former's theory of perceptual knowledge may be called the theory of a priori construction from the data of sense, and that of the latter the theory of logical construction from sense-data. We may now proceed to consider the two theories of perceptual knowledge thus designated respectively.

THE THEORY OF A PRIORI CONSTRUCTION FROM THE DATA OF SENSE

IN propounding this theory, Kant started by taking for granted a view which had been held before him by the British empiricists in general and Hume in particular, viz., that the immediate objects of sense are sensations, a kind of mental entities unconnected in themselves and variable from one individual mind to another and, so, of a relative and private character. He did not, however, mind viewing the immediate objects of sense as mental, although he ought to have done that, considering that the problem he was to deal with was that of our knowledge of the external world. The fact, however, is that this consideration never occupied his mind, simply because the problem of perceptual knowledge never struck him as that of our knowledge of things regarded as external to, and independent of, ourselves. This was perhaps due to the fact that, as a result of Descartes' introduction of dualism of mind and matter and the causal view of sense-perception, there came to prevail a mental atmosphere which induced most of the philosophers of the modern age, the revolutionary thinker of Königsberg not excepted, to admit sensations as the immediate objects of sense, and thereby prevented them from entertaining the possibility of our direct and immediate apprehension of physical things regarded as independent of the mind.

Kant, however, realized that perceptual knowledge cannot be said to consist merely in the reception of sensations that are relative and private, and unconnected in themselves, because, as he felt, they, by themselves, cannot obviously form themselves into a unity, nor can lead to anything common or universal—because, in other words, they lack just the characteristics which are essential to the object of perceptual knowledge, viz., unity and commonness or, in Kant's terminology, objectivity. He, therefore, undertook to solve the problem of

our knowledge of things as characterized by unity and objectivity, which, in fact, was the problem of perceptual knowledge as it presented itself to him.

Common sense, of course, is free from the problem raised by Kant, in so far as it holds that the direct and immediate objects of our perceptual knowledge are independently existing physical things, which are obviously unitary in themselves, and, being independent of ourselves as knowers, are common or objective. But so far as Kant is concerned, he initially left out the consideration of independently existing physical things in his theory of perceptual knowledge, and thereby precluded himself from admitting the unity and objectivity of the object of perceptual knowledge in the simple manner of common sense. In consequence, he had no option but to seek for the principle or principles of the explanation of these characteristics of the objects of perceptual knowledge within the sphere of the mind.

Now, within the sphere of the mind, as Hume had previously informed us, there are certain laws, the so-called 'laws of association', which, according to him, are capable of combining the unconnected and discrete objects of sense, viz., sensations. But Kant found himself unable to regard these laws as having the sense of the principles he was in search of. For, as he seems to have argued, these laws, being merely the ways of the behaviour of the sensations themselves—sensations that are private and relative—are naturally unable to impart universality or objectivity to the sensations, and the combination of sensations produced by them can only yield the juxtaposition, not the unity, of the sensations. Kant, therefore, preferred to go deeper into the structure of the mind in order to ascertain whether it is possessed of any innate equipment which could yield principles which, while obviously *a priori*, could yet apply to sensations so as to transmute them into an organized whole characterized by unity and objectivity—just the characteristics that are essential to the object of perceptual knowledge.

Kant's whole procedure with the above-mentioned object in view may, however, be summed up in these words: a need felt is a need realized. By means of an investigation which, despite its outstanding originality, was tied down to the old and none too sound *Logic* of Aristotle, but which is too elaborate and complicated to be dealt with within the short space at our disposal in this essay, Kant arrived at the

following conclusion. Our mind is originally possessed of a well-ordered system of concepts capable of yielding an equally well-ordered system of principles like those of causality, reciprocity, etc. These principles, notwithstanding the fact that they are *a priori*, are surprisingly such that they universally and necessarily operate in all our empirical knowledge. Thus did Kant find himself in a position to hold that although our sensations are in themselves relative and private and unconnected, the object of our perceptual knowledge—not being merely made up of our sensations, but being the product of the organization of our sensations by means of the universal and necessary principles of empirical knowledge—must be unitary and objective or common.

The position of Kant stated above is open to several serious difficulties, of which the one that needs to be taken immediate notice of relates to the fact that it conveys the solution of a problem arising out of an assumption which is undoubtedly arbitrary—the assumption that that which is immediately given in our perceptual experience is not, as according to common sense it is, an independently existing physical thing, but a mere medley of sensations occurring in a succession. Kant does not seem to have arrived at this view of the objects of sense through any independent criticism of common sense; but, as previously stated, he owed it to Hume, who in his turn inherited it from the philosophical tradition that came to prevail since the time of Descartes. However that may be, once Kant left independently existing physical things out of consideration in his epistemological theory, he could not but have left behind once for all the means of admitting the unity and objectivity of the object of perceptual knowledge. That being so, the problem of perceptual knowledge as formulated by him may easily be judged to be insoluble.

But it would be unfair to Kant to dispose of his epistemological position in such a summary fashion. The reason is that from the solution offered by him it appears that his problem, if it at all be called epistemological, may be so called in a recondite sense, and that, strictly speaking, it should be regarded as belonging to the special province of theoretical physics. The fact is that, in the name of dealing with the problem of the unity and objectivity of the object of perceptual knowledge, Kant really dealt with the problem of the fundamental laws of Nature or the principles of the interpretation of the universe. How he

came to attach epistemological significance to a problem that really pertains to theoretical physics may first be explained as follows.

Kant meant separation—of course, arbitrarily—by the *distinction* that may be drawn between the *matter* of things regarded as the constituent of their peculiar individuality, and their *form* regarded as their universal aspect, the aspect in virtue of which they are intelligible or, in other words, recognizable as universal or common. Thereupon he seems to have thought that if the matter of things be—and he believed, and quite rightly, that it must be—*given* to us in our perceptual knowledge of them, their form, being *ex hypothesi* separate from their matter, cannot be said to be similarly given, but should, on the contrary, be regarded as a contribution of ourselves out of the innate equipment of our mind. Kant thus arrived at the view that the form of things is *a priori*, and not, like their matter, empirical or derivable externally from experience. And finally, by arguing that that which our mind contributes out of its own resources can only be of the nature of laws or principles, he concluded that the form of things, in virtue of which they are known to us as universal or common, consists of the principles of the understanding of the universe or the fundamental laws of Nature. Thus did Kant bring himself to believe that the scientific problem relating to the fundamental laws of Nature breaks out within the heart of our perceptual knowledge of things, assuming the form of the problem of the unity and objectivity of the object of our perceptual knowledge; and, consequently, he took this problem to be genuinely epistemological. It should, however, be noted with care that with Kant originated the idea of a new branch of knowledge which, if designated as Epistemology, should at the same time be regarded as the very essence of 'pure physics'. The aim of this branch of knowledge, as Kant believed, is to investigate the principles of the understanding of the universe which are, in his view, the same as the fundamental laws of Nature as distinguished from the empirical laws which experimental physics seeks to derive from the study of natural phenomena or the actual behaviour of Nature.

In examining the above position of Kant we are, in the first place, required to consider whether the problem of the fundamental laws of Nature is, as on Kant's view it must be, identical with the so-called problem of the unity and objectivity of the object of our perceptual knowledge, or the former problem presupposes the acceptance of the

unity and objectivity of things as an ultimate datum, without any allowance being made for the idea that there may arise a problem regarding these aspects of things. In deciding this issue we have no option but to accept, on the following ground, the latter alternative in preference to the former which was adopted by Kant. Had it been a fact that things, when given, are given in their matter without form, that is, without unity and objectivity, they would have been absolutely unintelligible to us without at the same time our having any means of ascertaining that the situation is really so bad as that. In consequence, the intelligent understanding of things or the discovery of the laws of Nature would be out of the question, and this would obviously mean that no such thing as science, and especially physics, could be possible. But this absurd consequence would not follow from the view which holds that things, when given, are given in their form as well as in their matter, and, consequently, that their unity and objectivity, the aspects which constitute their intelligibility, are an ultimate datum. The reason is that the intelligibility of things is, to us, a matter of degree with a maximum and a minimum. The maximum obviously is the goal of an endless search typified by science, especially physics. But the minimum cannot be an absolute zero, because, if it were so, it would mean absolute unintelligibility from which there is no road to intelligibility. Strictly speaking, the minimum is embodied in the unity and objectivity of things, the characteristics which, according to common sense, belong to things in themselves, and with which things present themselves to us directly and immediately. The truth that is brought out by these considerations is, however, that science or rather physics is not a newly created body of knowledge preceded by a state of absolute nescience, but a development of, and an improvement upon, the minimal degree of knowledge proper embodied in common sense.

In the second place, we have to refer to Kant's solution of his so-called epistemological problem with a view to ascertaining whether it fulfils the demand of physics in regard to the laws of Nature, and also whether it yields a satisfactory theory of perceptual knowledge. Let us first consider the former point.

The question that needs to be specially discussed on this point is whether the laws of Nature can be said to be *a priori* in the Kantian sense, viz., as the contributions of our mind or rather our faculty of understanding. Of course, there is no denying the fact that the laws of

Nature are not easy to discover, and that in order to discover them we are to make use—indeed, in an ever-increasing manner—of our faculty of understanding. This is precisely the reason why there is the problem relating to the laws of Nature, the problem which is of fundamental importance to physics. But it would be going far from truth to hold, as Kant does, that the laws of Nature belong to us, not with Nature herself. The genuineness of a law of Nature would undoubtedly depend upon its applicability to the phenomena of Nature, which seems to be opposed to the conception of the laws of Nature as *a priori*. But even granted that a law that is purely *a priori* may actually apply to the phenomena of Nature, its being so applicable should not be due to its being *a priori* but to its reflecting a general way in which Nature behaves. In any attempt to discover the laws of Nature it would, therefore, be of little importance to try and show that they are *a priori*, and what should be of fundamental importance is to show that they actually apply to the phenomena of Nature. But it is doubtful whether the fundamental laws of Nature as formulated by Kant do apply to the phenomena of Nature, and, consequently, whether they deserve to be given that title.

It is in virtue of his view that the laws of Nature are *a priori* that Kant found himself in a position to make the astounding declaration that the human understanding is 'the law-giver of Nature'. But in this he obviously subscribed to a view which is atrociously anthropomorphic, and seems to be contrary to the true spirit of science which undoubtedly aims at interpreting the universe as objectively and as far apart from human idiosyncrasies as possible. The anthropomorphic attitude towards the universe, however, reaches its culmination in idealism where science, no matter whether scientists themselves are always aware of it or not, meets with the worst fate in the shape of extinction. So far as Kant is concerned, he, though not as uncompromising an idealist as Berkeley, is not altogether free from idealism, notwithstanding the fact that he made a serious attempt to refute this doctrine. For in spite of differing from Berkeley by holding that the *matter* of things is not dependent upon, but is only given to, our mind, Kant advocated the view that their *form* as expressed in the laws of Nature is mind-dependent. This really points to the fundamental defect that vitiated Kant's solution of the problem relating to the laws of Nature and also, as we shall see later, his epistemological theory.

This defect consisted in the failure to realize the truth that the things which make up Nature are indivisibly *form* and *matter* in one, and that their form is as independent of us as their matter, so that when things are given to us they must be said to be given not only in their matter but in their form. Had Kant realized this truth, he would never have missed the common view, and, in fact, the correct one, about the laws of Nature, viz., that they are not our contributions, but need to be derived, of course, by the exercise of our understanding, from what is given to us about Nature; and, as such, belong with Nature.

It now remains for us to consider the second point which relates to the satisfactoriness or otherwise of Kant's epistemological theory. Here we may start by observing that Kant realized a truth which escaped the notice of Hume, viz., that the object of our perceptual knowledge has not only a matter but a form or, in other words, is an intelligible existence. But then, he was unable to overcome, and, in fact, shared with Hume, the prejudice that that which is given in our perceptual knowledge is the *matter* of things without their *form*. In consequence, Kant failed to realize that the correction of the mistake of Hume's view of perceptual knowledge could be possible in one way, and one way only, viz., by means of the recognition of the fact that what is *given* in our perceptual knowledge is an intelligible existence, that is, a concrete object having both form and matter. In coming to correct the mistake of Hume's epistemological position, what he actually did was, however, to add a mistake of his own to that of Hume. His mistake consisted in the view that the form and the matter of the object of our perceptual knowledge are separate, the former being a priori and the latter empirical, and that the faculty of perceptual knowledge, correspondingly, is not simple nor single, but complex and twofold, consisting of two separate faculties with two separate titles, Understanding and Sensibility.

No student of the *Critique of Pure Reason* can, however, fail to notice the seriousness of the difficulty in which Kant landed himself as a result of his admission of this twofold dualism. Nor can he excuse Kant for the artificiality, complexity and prolixity of the solution that he offered to it. What was mainly responsible for Kant's fault in this respect was his tacit acceptance of the erroneous psychological doctrine known as psychological atomism which constituted the essence of Hume's epistemological theory. Of course, Kant realized that this

doctrine is no theory of perceptual knowledge, because, as he rightly saw, the object of perceptual knowledge cannot be said to be a mere medley of relative, private and unconnected sensations. But with a view to constructing a theory of perceptual knowledge he only admitted the necessity of the addition of form to sensations regarded as the matter of the object of perceptual knowledge, and, correspondingly, the addition of understanding regarded as the faculty of intelligent comprehension to sensibility regarded as the faculty of bare awareness.

Thus did Kant leave Hume's atomistic theory of sense-perception unchallenged on the psychological plane, nay, made use of it in building up his own theory of perceptual knowledge. But psychological atomism, even regarded as a purely psychological theory, succeeds, as psychologists themselves have come to realize from time to time, only in distorting the barest fact about sense-perception by falsely abstracting the *matter* of things presented for our knowledge from their *form* or 'configuration'. Kant's epistemological theory may, therefore, be said to have been vitiated by an erroneous psychological doctrine. The difficult problems of the *Analytic of Concepts* and the *Analytic of Principles* in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant's solution of which formed the constructive part of his epistemological theory, would not have arisen but for his initial acceptance of Hume's psychological doctrine, and his subsequent attempt to remedy the inadequacy of that doctrine with a view to securing a theory of perceptual knowledge. So, many of the complications in Kant's epistemological theory are really uncalled for. If, however, we give up, as we ought to do, Hume's psychological doctrine as well as the complications which Kant has imposed upon the understanding of perceptual knowledge as a result of his acceptance of this doctrine of Hume, we shall easily find ourselves in a position to realize the truth of the common-sense view which holds that that which is given in our perceptual knowledge is not a chaotic mass of unintelligible materials but a complete and concrete thing, a thing intelligible in itself, being form and matter in one.

Nevertheless, Kant, in so far as he held that perceiving is not complete in, nor co-extensive with, sensing, but involves understanding also, realized a truth which Hume was unable to do—the truth that perceiving as a way of knowing is essentially judging, and that the unit of perceptual knowledge is perceptual judgment. It is in view of this truth that Kant came to realize that the subject plays no less a part

with regard to the possibility of perceptual knowledge than the object must be said to do. Hence his view that perceptual knowledge is dependent upon the activity of the subject for its completion. The soundness of this view would, however, depend upon how the nature of the activity of the subject involved in perceptual knowledge is understood. Now, Kant, who, by following Hume, had missed the intelligibility of the object of perceptual knowledge in the immediate data of sense, but at the same time realized that intelligibility is essential to it, had naturally no option but to hold that the subject's rôle in the perceptual situation is not to *explore*, but to *manipulate* in order that the unintelligible data of sense could be rendered intelligible or be made into the object of perceptual knowledge properly so called.

Now, in coming to examine the above position of Kant, we should not commit the mistake of denying that there may be cases of perceptual judgment in which the subject's function has been to manipulate the data of sense. But it seems that such cases are confined to the field of erroneous perceptual experience, and do not extend over that of veridical perception or perceptual knowledge proper. Let us, however, ask whether Kant, who holds that perceptual judgment as such involves manipulation on the part of the subject, can, consistently with this view, account for the validity of valid perceptual judgments, and for the distinction between true and false perceptual judgments. To the former part of this question Kant, of course, has a reply which is as follows. The subject manipulates the immediate data of sense not arbitrarily nor at haphazard, but in accordance with certain principles, which, while being the contributions of the subject, are universally and necessarily operative in perceptual knowledge. That being so, a perceptual judgment involving subjective manipulation cannot but be characterized by objectivity and so be valid. But granted that there are some such principles, and also that they are exactly what Kant took them to be, there is no getting away from the fact that by the validity of a valid perceptual judgment he can only mean its subjective objectivity, and that he thereby misses the true sense of its validity, viz., its trans-subjective objectivity. That he has landed himself in such a difficulty becomes all the more evident from the fact that he really has no answer to offer to the second part of the question we have just raised. Since, according to Kant, perceptual judgment as such must involve the universal and necessary principles in question, there cannot, on his

view, be any such thing as an erroneous perceptual judgment in distinction from a true one.

The truth about the point under discussion, however, seems to be this. A perceptual judgment is truly objective and hence valid, in so far as it relates to a trans-subjective object merely explored or discovered by the subject. But the manipulative reaction of the subject, or of its adjunct, the psycho-physiological organism, or of both, on the trans-subjective object interferes in varying degrees with the true objectivity of the perceptual judgment concerned. Viewed in this perspective, the difficulty of Kant's present position lies in his failure to realize that the subject's function is not merely to manipulate but to explore, and that normally it explores rather than manipulates. It is precisely on account of his failure in this respect that the idea never occurred to Kant that the immediate objects of perceptual experience are normally things intelligible in themselves, so that things in being known are only discovered by the subject and need not be products of its manipulation.

The most serious difficulty of Kant's epistemological theory, however, remains yet to be considered; and it is as follows. The proposition: 'I perceive a thing', according to Kant, has the same meaning as the proposition: 'the thing *appears* to me'. Now, the latter proposition might be the correct expression of the perceptual situation concerned if it were taken to mean that the thing presents *itself* to me, in which case the thing's appearing to me would only be an event that happens between my self in itself and the thing in itself without affecting the reality of either. But very different is Kant's understanding of the proposition in question. According to him, the thing as it appears to me is an *appearance* of the thing, and, as such, is distinct from, not identical with, the thing in itself. This position of Kant is, however, the necessary corollary of the result of his investigations in the Transcendental Aesthetic and the Transcendental Analytic in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, viz., that perceptual knowledge, while taking in the contributions of the thing in itself, must, for its completion, turn away from it and fall back upon the perceiving mind in order to gather from it new factors—space and time from its sensibility and the principles of causality, reciprocity, etc., from its understanding. But no matter how he arrived at it, this position is tantamount to presenting perceiving as an outlandish way of knowing, if not to denuding it of the sense of knowing as such.

But even if we do not question the validity of Kant's view that our perceptual knowledge is confined to appearances, we shall, on this view, have no means of knowing that there are things-in-themselves, and, consequently, we shall be unable to distinguish between things-in-themselves and their appearances or to recognize appearances as appearances. This difficulty is, however, one, of which Kant was himself aware; and he tried to solve it by separating *thinking* from *knowing* and then holding that thinking can have for its object what is beyond the reach of knowing, viz., the thing-in-itself. But this, really, is no solution of the difficulty. For, thinking and knowing being, on Kant's view, mutually exclusive, the object of knowledge, viz., appearance, and the object of thought, viz., the thing-in-itself, must be absolutely disparate, so that we would have no means of ascertaining what appearance is related to what thing-in-itself in particular, nor could we be prevented from assigning any appearance to any thing-in-itself at pleasure.

Nevertheless, thinking without knowing, which Kant admits in distinction from knowing as such, is indeed of great value in that it makes for the progress of knowledge. In order that our knowledge may grow not only in extensivity but also in intensity, as it should do, it is necessary that we should not rest content with whatever knowledge we may have already acquired of things, but *think* that things may be different from what they have been known to be. Such thinking provides us with a safeguard against dogmatism by not allowing our knowledge at any given stage to be treated as final. And on this account it may also be said to *regulate* our knowledge. This refers us to Kant, who also found in *thinking* the means of the regulation of our knowledge. But he differed from our understanding of the regulative function of thought by holding that that which is thought of is a thing-in-itself, not the mere possibility of a thing's being different from what it is known to be. And, as a result, he failed to realize the truth that thought regarded as distinct from knowledge serves merely to draw our attention to the fact that our journey to reality is difficult and long, and that while it thus proves an invaluable aid to our search after reality, it cannot itself point to reality in any manner whatsoever. Strictly speaking, the way to reality is to be found in that which thought is called upon to regulate, viz., knowledge. In declaring things-in-themselves to be merely thinkable, but unknown and unknowable, Kant, therefore, missed the

truth that the thinkability of things presupposes their knowability, and that that which is unknowable is necessarily unthinkable.

In conclusion, let us once more remind ourselves of the truth which Kant brought out by his epistemological enquiry, viz., that perception as a way of knowing is not, as on Hume's view it is, a mere psychological phenomenon, but is of a logical character, being perceptual judgment. It is on this account that perceptual experience may be false as well as true. Nevertheless, perception may be understood in two distinct senses—one wider and the other narrower. In the former sense, it is mere perceptual judgment apart from the consideration of its truth or falsity, whereas in the latter it is true perceptual judgment or perceptual knowledge proper, implying the identity of the thing as known and the thing-in-itself. Kant was, however, indifferent to the distinction between these two senses of perception, and came to understand perception in the former sense only. But equally indifferent to this distinction, common sense, on the other hand, understands perception in the latter sense only. Thus in either case there is complete absence of the recognition of the distinction between true and false perceptual experience—a distinction which, as we have insisted in our first two essays, is the proper subject-matter for epistemological investigation. That being so, for the purpose of epistemology it would not do merely to consider perceptual judgments by themselves, but it would be necessary to refer them to trans-subjective objects and to realize that they are true or false according as they do, or do not, mean, or correspond with, trans-subjective objects. This, of course, brings in a problem—the problem of the *meaning* of perceptual judgment, which may be hard for epistemology to solve, but which should not be avoided in any manner whatsoever, especially by ignoring the logical import of perception and the distinction between true and false perceptual judgments. The simplest and perhaps the only means of meeting the difficulty of the situation would, however, be to realize that knowledge yielded by perception, in a sense, lacks finality and is adventurous, so that on the perceptual level what is at one time taken to be knowledge may subsequently turn out to be no knowledge at all. And it seems that common sense alone is in a position to meet the difficulty in this manner, and, consequently, that no understanding of the nature of our knowledge of the external world is worth the name, if it is divorced from common sense.

VI

THE THEORY OF LOGICAL CONSTRUCTION FROM SENSE-DATA

THIS theory, of which Bertrand Russell is perhaps the best known exponent, is, like the previous one, a product of serious philosophical thinking, and has an undoubted claim to originality. It has acquired considerable importance in the field of philosophy partly on this account and partly on account of its affiliation to the recent developments of mathematics and logic which are threatening in our day to bring about revolutionary changes in philosophic outlook. Now, while Russell's epistemological problem has remained more or less unchanged at the different stages of the development of his philosophical thought, his solution of it has varied in his successive writings. For this reason it is not possible for a casual student of Russell to undertake a detailed enquiry into his epistemological theory. So far as we are concerned, we have an additional reason for excusing ourselves from such an undertaking. And the reason is that our object in these essays is merely to make a general survey of the typical theories of perceptual knowledge, of which Russell's is undoubtedly one.

In many places in these essays we have had occasion to deal with Russell's epistemological theory in some of its aspects. But here our main object will be to examine his epistemological problem itself with a view to ascertaining whether it is genuine or not. The easy gain that may come out of such a procedure would be that if the epistemological problem as formulated by him is found to be not genuine, the wealth of mathematical and logical subtlety by means of which he has enriched its solution will come to be judged as a mere cloak for hiding the poverty of his epistemological position, and he himself will be shown to be one of those philosophers who have missed the truth about the nature of perceptual knowledge.

Russell's theory of logical construction from sense-data, as previ-

ously observed, involves the application of the concept of causality in the understanding of sense-perception. In consequence, and as its title indicates, it is committed to the view that the immediate objects of sense are not physical things themselves, but the so-called sense-data which are only effects produced by them. It is, perhaps, in consideration of this view that Russell forgoes reference to the so-called independently existing physical things in the understanding of our knowledge of the external world. Thus he, like Kant before him, has come to hold that the problem relating to our knowledge of the external world should not take the form: how we know physical things existing independently of us.

Of course, Russell might hold, as Hume had done before, that no problem worth the name arises in connection with our knowledge of the external world, and that with regard to this knowledge we have to rest content with the acceptance of the alleged fact that we apprehend the so-called data of sense. But he seems to be in the company of Kant in realizing that the data of sense are of a chaotic nature and also private and relative, being variable from one individual percipient to another and, even in the case of one and the same individual percipient, in varying circumstances. And on this ground he holds, like Kant, that there is a conflict between the data of sense and the physical world as we ordinarily believe it to be or as it is understood by physics, between the 'world of sense' and the 'world of physics', as Russell calls them. But this conflict, as Russell holds and Kant also may be said to have done before, is not one that can or should be resolved by means of the condemnation of the one or the other of the two worlds as unreal. According to Russell, it only gives rise to a problem which is nothing but that of bridging the gulf between the world of sense and the world of physics, or rather of constructing the latter world from the former. In this respect also Russell's position is similar to that of Kant, and no student of Kant who comes to study Russell's theory of logical construction from sense-data can fail to realize that this is so.

The recognition of the conflict between the so-called world of sense and another world supposed to be disparate from it, no matter how the latter is designated and conceived of in detail, seems, however, to be as old as the history of philosophy. Attempts to resolve the conflict are equally old. But they have usually been based on the idea that the conflict is real, and so cannot be resolved except by means of the denial

of the reality of the one or the other of the two worlds. Accordingly, they have assumed either of two forms—one typified by Protagoreanism and the other by Platonism, the former denying the reality of the world regarded as disparate from the world of sense, and the latter that of the world of sense itself. It is perhaps on this account that Russell is under the impression that not only no attempt has ever been made to solve the problem which he has set before himself, but the importance and even the existence of this problem have generally remained unknown. But what we have noticed above about the parallelism between Russell's position and that of Kant goes to show that this impression of Russell is not correct. Kant, as we have seen in the previous chapter, was fully conscious of, and offered a solution to, a problem which is not dissimilar to that which Russell has undertaken to solve. That being so, it is worth while to enquire whether Russell has succeeded in establishing the genuineness of an epistemological problem, the like of which, as we have previously seen, proved insoluble and fictitious in the case of Kant.

In dealing with this question, we have to examine the concepts of the 'world of sense' and the 'world of physics', and specially the view of the two as separate and disparate, on which is really based the epistemological problem as formulated by Russell. Let us first take up the concept of 'the world of physics'. The use of the word 'physics' in connection with this concept of undoubted philosophical importance, indeed, speaks of a feeling of respect for science with which recent philosophers are generally imbued. And this is an indication of the prevalence of a healthy cultural atmosphere in the present age. But then, the trouble with philosophers, especially in an age of scientific progress, is that their sense of respect for science often rises to the extreme so as to mislead them into the belief that common sense generally stands in need of correction in the light of scientific knowledge. This circumstance, however, not only brings no credit to philosophy, but does not convey a correct estimate of the aim and function of science, especially physics. Of course, physics deals with the physical world of our ordinary knowledge, and it does so by way of interpreting it in the light of verifiable hypotheses. But the hypotheses themselves cannot be said to constitute a world of reality separate from the one which they serve to interpret, and with reference to which they need to be verified. Nor can they be said to alter the world of our day-to-day

knowledge or to yield a world of reality different from it. In fact, the so-called world of physics regarded as a world of reality is indistinguishable from the physical world of our common knowledge.

Now, the hypotheses or rather the laws, in terms of which the phenomena of Nature may suitably be interpreted, are nothing *given*; nor, strictly speaking, are they *objects* of our knowledge. They only need to be *constructed*, and their construction obviously depends upon physics. We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that the consideration of the world of physics cannot give rise to an epistemological problem concerning the possibility of our knowledge of the physical world, and that whatever problem it raises comes within the field of physics, and is solely dependent upon physics for its solution. Curiously, however, the consideration of the world of physics has a determining influence over Russell's formulation of the epistemological problem. But, then, it should not be forgotten that the consideration of the so-called world of sense has an equal share in determining Russell's epistemological problem, which, as seen before, is that of bridging the gulf between the world of sense and the world of physics. This brings us to the question of the validity of Russell's conception of the world of sense.

While common sense holds that the objects of sense are nothing but independently existing physical things themselves, Russell differs by holding that these are chaotic masses of materials of a private and relative character. But why should Russell have viewed the world of sense in this manner, and differently from common sense? Of course, he is one of those philosophers who dismiss the possibility of our direct and immediate apprehension of independently existing physical things on the ground that this possibility is ruled out by the phenomena of relativity of sense-experience and those of illusion, hallucination and dream. But, as we have argued time and again, this position is based on a misunderstanding of the bearing of the consideration of these phenomena upon the view of perceptual knowledge as the direct and immediate apprehension of independently existing physical things. So Russell's understanding of the world of sense cannot hold good unless he has a fresh reason to advance in support of it. We, on our side, cannot think of any such reason. But Russell does not feel helpless. The reason in demand, as Russell believes, is derivable from the authority of a

science, viz., psychology, which, according to him, presents exactly the same view of the world of sense as he advocates.

It is just here that the crux of the situation lies. The kind of psychology on whose authority Russell depends for the vindication of his view of the world of sense is that which, as we have pointed out in connection with our examination of Kant's theory of perceptual knowledge, presents an abstract and distorted view of what is given in sense-perception by telling us that the immediate objects of sense are chaotic masses of materials standing in need of manipulation. That this view of the immediate data of sense is abstract and distorted would not have remained unknown to Russell himself, had he realized the deeper significance of one of the characteristics of the so-called world of sense which he has brought out, while distinguishing between the world of sense and the world of physics. He has stated that the world of sense, unlike the world of physics, strikes us as something strange, and is difficult for us now to rediscover. But why is this so? The answer seems to be no other than this, that the so-called world of sense is an abstraction from the physical world of our common knowledge, and that few of us are trained in the art of abstraction of this kind. In fact, the world of sense regarded as something separate from the physical world of our ordinary knowledge, which has often been admitted by philosophers, is a mere figment—no matter whether it is conceived of as made up of sensations and, so, as mental, or, in the manner of Russell, as physical, or, lastly, as neither physical nor mental. At any rate, it is nothing *actual*. And since nothing can be said to be *given* which is not actual, it cannot be spoken of, as Russell speaks of it, as given. If it should at all be admitted, although we do not see any reason for its admission, it must be said to be a product of *construction* or an object of inference.

What, then, is really given in perceptual knowledge or, to put the same question in another way, what is the object of sense properly so called? In answering it, it would be worth while to consider the claim of the so-called world of physics. Now, so far as Russell is concerned, he holds, on the one hand, that the world of physics is inferred, not given, and, on the other, that it is familiar, not strange, to us. But this position of Russell obviously involves a contradiction, because that which is inferred, being incapable of being given, cannot be said to be familiar. The contradiction would, however, vanish if the term 'world of physics' be understood in the two cases in the two different senses

we have distinguished above instead of in one and the same sense as Russell has understood it. Understood in the sense of a body of legitimate hypotheses or laws about the physical world of our common knowledge, the world of physics is obviously not given, but inferred or constructed. And, as such, it is strange to the plain man and even to the physicist, because the physicist is after all one of us, and what is really familiar to him is the physical world commonly known to us all. But understood in the sense of a world of reality, it is familiar to us, because in this sense it is identical with the physical world of our common knowledge which is given and not inferred. All this, however, goes to show that the world of physics is, in a sense, identical with the world of sense, the world which is said to be given, and not that the two are disparate or in mutual conflict. Nor, in the sense of a body of laws of Nature, can it be said to be in conflict with the world of sense; because the laws of Nature must be derivable from, and verifiable with reference to, the physical world of our common knowledge, the world of sense properly so called. That being so, there can really be no gulf to separate the world of physics from the world of sense, and, consequently, no epistemological problem can arise in the form in which Russell has raised it.

It is of interest to observe that the epistemological problem, in the case of Kant, when judged from the solution he offered to it, is the same as that which Russell has set before himself and tried to solve, viz., how the world of physics is to be constructed from the world of sense. But judged from the form in which Kant found and initially formulated it, it is different, being the problem of the possibility of the unity and objectivity of the object of perceptual knowledge, the characteristics which the immediate data of sense, *ex hypothesi*, lack. The fact is that Kant, while forgoing reference to independently existing physical things in his understanding of perceptual knowledge, kept in view the characteristics of unity and objectivity which, according to common sense, belong to physical things in themselves. But while common sense regards these characteristics as accomplished facts and as capable of being directly and immediately revealed by our sense-experience, Kant held the view that they are neither, but stand in need of construction by means of human device—a view which is really the presupposition of the epistemological problem as he found it. Nevertheless, he remained close to common sense in so far as the guid-

ing principle in his treatment of the epistemological problem was the simple common-sense idea of a physical world made up of things characterized by unity and objectivity, and no theory of the physical world accepted merely on the authority of physics. But that does not mean that construction of a theory of the physical world was no part of his solution of the epistemological problem. On the contrary, as we have previously tried to show, his epistemological theory is only another name for a kind of physics which is intended to provide a manner of the understanding of the general nature of the world, instead of offering a solution of any problem of knowledge strictly so called. But, then, the physics as conceived of by Kant is not the natural science bearing this title, but philosophy regarded as a speculative adventure on the part of the human mind aiming at the understanding of the universe. In fact, Kant had the strong conviction that philosophy has as much a right as physics to hold an independent enquiry into the nature of the universe. And about the specific function of philosophy in this respect he held that it consists in laying bare the preconditions of the unity and objectivity of the objects of our perceptual knowledge. It is thus clear that in his treatment of the so-called epistemological problem Kant's aim was to build up a critique of physics or, in his own terminology, 'pure physics' as distinguished from physics in the usually accepted sense of this term.

But very different is Russell's position in this respect. The world of physics that needs to be constructed from the so-called world of sense, in his view, is not, as in Kant's view it is, what philosophy demands it to be, but what physics, as an independent branch of knowledge, understands it to be. But in holding this view Russell fails to realize the truth that the world as conceived of by physics is the product of construction from the world of our common knowledge, that is, the world made up of things characterized by unity and objectivity. At any rate, it is not derivable from the world of sense as understood by him, where there is no indication of order and system, or of anything of an objective or universal nature. Strictly speaking, in the context of the epistemological problem which arises, as it does in the case of Russell as well as Kant, from the admission of the so-called world of sense, the main consideration about the world that needs to be constructed should be that it is a world where things are unitary and objective or common. Maybe this consideration is trivial and conveys little information about

the physicist's special task of interpreting the universe. But it cannot be avoided except by means of the liquidation of the epistemological problem which arises from the admission of the so-called world of sense. Such a problem being admitted, as Russell admits in common with Kant, it seems that the world standing in need of construction, that is, the so-called world of physics, should conform to Kant's idea about it rather than to Russell's. This obviously points to an advantage that Kant may be said to have over Russell.

But, then, Kant, while taking into consideration the unity and objectivity of things, left out of account things-in-themselves, without reference to which no idea can obviously be had of these characteristics. And thus he made his position anomalous. But Russell seems to be free from such an anomaly on account of the fact that he does not entertain the idea of things-in-themselves. He only admits the so-called world of sense on the one hand, and the physical world as conceived of by physics on the other. And he holds that the world of reality is not unknown and unknowable, but knowable, in as much as it is, in his view, the world comprising the world of sense and the world of physics with the gulf between the two bridged by means of logical construction. But even then, free from difficulty Russell is not, because the so-called world of sense being admitted, the world of physics, or rather the world as conceived of by the science of physics, which he admits, but Kant did not, in the treatment of the epistemological problem, cannot be admitted at the same time. Starting—as, according to Russell, we are required to do—from the so-called world of sense which is unintelligible, being a chaotic mass of discrete, relative and private materials, we cannot obviously entertain the idea of the intelligible world of physics, not to speak of our being able to construct it out of the former. Of course, Russell, who regards the object of sense as of a physical character, may be said to have an advantage over Kant in that he is free from the difficulty about the construction of the physical world, which naturally arises in the case of Kant on account of his view of the objects of sense as of a mental character. But really this advantage dwindles into insignificance in view of the fact that Russell's conception of the objects of sense as physical cannot, any more than Kant's view of them as mental, save them from contingency. And, as Berkeley's philosophy had clearly demonstrated, once it is admitted, as is done by Russell, that the objects of sense are physically and physio-

logically contingent, the consequence that would naturally, though not inevitably, follow is that they are mental. That being so, Russell can have little advantage over Kant on account of the latter's view of the objects of sense as mental.

Russell, however, declares that the epistemological problem as formulated by him is 'vital'. Kant went further in his view that upon the solution of the epistemological problem, which he set before himself, would depend the vindication of mathematics and physics as sciences in the strict sense, viz., as bodies of synthetic truths, and also the determination of the fate of metaphysics. In this context, Kant was unduly harsh upon the metaphysicians before his time in so far as he condemned them all as dogmatists. But Russell has not, in this respect, lagged behind. In explaining why metaphysics, far from endeavouring to construct the world of physics from the world of sense, has remained unconscious of the problem arising out of the conflict between the two worlds, he has unfairly attributed to metaphysicians in general the Parmenidean belief that the real is unchanging and unchangeable, and that the objects of sense are unreal. Physics also has not escaped his reproach, not on account of its understanding the physical world in its characteristic manner, but on the alleged ground that it is unconscious of the conflict between the world of sense and the world as it conceives it to be, and of the problem arising therefrom.

Russell has, however, given credit to psychology on the understanding that this science brings to light the chaotic character of the objects of sense, and thereby makes us conscious of the conflict between the world of sense and the world of our common knowledge as well as of physics, and of the necessity of bridging the gulf between the two. Nevertheless, psychology comes in for his condemnation on the alleged ground that the principles which may serve to fulfil this necessity cannot be supplied by it. In both these respects, Russell is, however, very much in the company of Kant, although he seems to be unconscious of this fact. As we have previously tried to show, Kant was roused to the consciousness of the so-called epistemological problem by the results of Hume's psychological treatment of sense-perception. And realizing that Hume's psychologism had left that problem unsolved, he felt the necessity of a special enquiry invested with the responsibility for its solution. Regarding the nature and the source of the principles which psychology is alleged to be unable to

supply, but which are in demand for the solution of the problem, there is, of course, a difference between Russell's view and that of Kant. Yet one cannot fail to be struck by the similarity that there is between their views in this respect. According to Russell, the principles in question are mathematico-logical, derivable from modern logic and the recent developments of pure mathematics. Kant, who preceded the modern developments of logic and mathematics, tried to show that they are the subject-matter of a new branch of knowledge which may be called transcendental logic, but which, if we are not mistaken, lies on the borderland between logic—of course, not more advanced than that of Aristotle—and mathematics, especially geometry, naturally of the Euclidean type.

Our main point is, however, as follows. The fundamental difficulty of Russell's epistemological position lies in his employment of the concept of causality in the understanding of sense-perception, which precludes him from admitting what is ordinarily called the external world. Having thus missed the world, which is really the direct and immediate object of our perceptual knowledge on the one hand, and the subject-matter of scientific interpretation on the other, Russell admits in its place two worlds, the so-called world of sense and the so-called world of physics, and regards them as separate and disparate. But the fact is that the two worlds are each an abstraction, and that the ideas of them are meaningless except in so far as they are respectively taken to be the *matter* and the *form* of the physical things of our common knowledge, which can only be distinguished, but not separated. In his admission of the separation between the two worlds, Russell is, however, under the misleading influence of that kind of psychology which, as previously mentioned, presents a distorted view of the objects of sense. But this kind of psychology, as psychologists themselves have sometimes urged, needs to be replaced by another kind which informs us that the objects of sense are not crude materials of a chaotic nature, but concrete physical things. That being so, the alleged conflict between the judgment of psychology and that of physics about the physical world must be said to be baseless, and physics should be regarded as deserving of praise, instead of blame, from a Russell or a Kant, for its not recognizing this conflict and the epistemological problem consequent thereupon.

It seems, then, that it is futile to take stock of a wide field of know-

ledge comprising metaphysics, physics and psychology, and to shower praise here and blame there within this vast field, as Russell has done, with a view to establishing that the epistemological problem which he has set before himself is of vital importance. Not to speak of establishing its vital character, one cannot by this means even establish that it is genuine. For, judged on its own merit, as it should be done, it is found to be based on the acceptance of false abstractions; and hence it cannot but be arbitrary and unwarranted. This is ruinous to the theory of logical construction from sense-data which is but an attempt to solve the problem in question.

VII

INTERPRETING THE WORLD

WE have so far been concerned with the consideration of two outstanding ways of understanding the nature of our knowledge of the external world, which are divergent from the epistemological standpoint of common sense. Whereas according to common sense, our knowledge of the external world consists in the direct and immediate revelation to us of independently existing things regarded as accomplished facts intelligible in themselves, one of them holds that the objects of perceptual knowledge are mind-dependent or, in a sense, are products of the creative act of the knowing mind; and the other, that these objects are the results of our interpretation of chaotic and unintelligible materials supplied from an extraneous source. The former known as idealism, while presenting the most absurd view of the nature of perceptual knowledge, implies the denial of the possibility of the interpretation of the world. For, if the world as known to us is dependent upon, or produced by, our mind, it should naturally be absolutely transparent to us in so far as it is known to us, so that there would be neither any scope for, nor any need of, our interpreting it with a view to making it more intelligible to us. The latter is, of course, alive to the necessity of the interpretation of the world, but it obviously assigns this task to perceptual knowledge as such, and thereby renders it altogether nugatory. For the very idea of constructing an intelligible world from chaotic and unintelligible materials, as we have already argued, is an absurdity.

The fact, however, is that if the possibility of the interpretation of the world be admitted, as it should be done, especially in view of the fruitfulness of the enquiries that have been made by man into the mysteries of the world, there arises the need for the replacement of the unfavourable epistemological views considered above by a favourable one which, it is needless to point out, is provided by common sense. The essential demands of the possibility of the interpretation of the

world, really, are: (i) that the direct and immediate objects of our perceptual knowledge are things existing independently of us; (ii) that they are intelligible, not unintelligible, in themselves. Both these demands are obviously fulfilled by the common-sense view of our knowledge of the external world. And, for the reason already explained,¹ it cannot be objected that the admission of the intelligibility of things in themselves is incompatible with the idea of the interpretation of the world.

While epistemology thus serves to ascertain the true nature of the cognitive situation and also conveys the information that this situation is really favourable to the possibility of the interpretation of the world, this task itself does not come within this branch of knowledge, but should belong to some other. What that branch of knowledge is is the question which we are required to deal with in this part of the essay.

Now, the claim of science, especially physics, to be the branch of knowledge in question is too strong to be ignored. In fact, hardly anyone disputes today that physics is competent to interpret the world so as to provide a more systematic and more comprehensive view of it than common sense is in a position to do. But, then, philosophy or rather metaphysics has sustained itself, nay, flourished through the ages not only by putting forward the same claim but by offering its own interpretation of the world. Time was when philosophy used to oppose science by interpreting the world in a manner utterly divergent from that of the latter. This circumstance was the outcome of a cultural atmosphere in which philosophers were imbued with the medieval outlook dominated by predilection for spirituality and the scientists were under the sway of dogmatic materialism, the first fruit of the emancipation of science from the yoke of spiritualism. Subsequently, however, philosophy not only gave up its old opposition to science but came to realize the need of drawing upon the findings of science. Nevertheless, it retained the idea of interpreting the world—and this on the understanding that it alone could offer the most comprehensive view of the world. But it is precisely this idea that has come to be repudiated in our day by philosophers themselves. The view has been held by unorthodox philosophers, whose number is gradually increasing, that the interpretation of the world is the special prerogative of science, and that

¹ *Vide ante*, p. 165.

philosophy, whatever else its business may be, should be absolutely unconcerned with this task. The situation thus created, however, demands an impartial enquiry into the question whether philosophy is competent to interpret the world.

This question should be investigated with reference to the two distinct standpoints which have generally prevailed in the field of philosophy. Philosophers have sometimes been profoundly impressed by the certainty of the truths of mathematics and have, consequently, tried to shape their own enquiry after the pattern of mathematics. Accordingly, they have built up a stock of a priori notions in the hope that they could make use of them in understanding the world with the kind of certainty that characterizes mathematical truths. Thus has the idea of a priori interpretation of the world gained currency in certain philosophical circles. On the other hand, there have been philosophers who are rather shy of mathematics and yet have followed in the footsteps of the scientists in emphasizing the importance of empirical facts and in holding the view that no interpretation of the world is worth the name unless it conforms to the deliverance of experience. Thus the idea of the empirical understanding of the world has also come to occupy a prominent place in the field of philosophy.

Both apriorism and empiricism may, however, be said to be alive to the importance of concepts as well as of experience in the interpretation of the world. Their difference pertains to their respective procedures and their respective views of the relative importance of the two things. The apriorists proceed from concepts, admitted more or less arbitrarily, to the facts of experience on the tacit understanding that concepts are primary, and facts of experience secondary, in respect of the interpretation of the world. In consequence, they run the risk of distorting or even ignoring facts of experience. The empiricists, on the other hand, proceed, or at least profess to do, from the facts of experience to such concepts as are supposed to be warranted by them, and they do that on the understanding that the facts of experience are primary, and concepts secondary, with regard to the interpretation of the world. But it is doubtful whether the so-called empiricists have always been able to accept facts of experience without previously interpreting them in the light of their preconceived notions or prejudices, and, consequently, whether the concepts employed by them in the interpretation of the world are always warranted by facts of experience. However

that may be, the question raised earlier splits itself into two separate questions: (i) Is a priori interpretation of the world possible? (ii) Can there be a more comprehensive empirical interpretation of the world than that which may come within the reach of science? Let us first discuss the former.

*Is a priori Interpretation of the
World Possible?*

For our immediate purpose it is not necessary to doubt or to deny that philosophy may be in possession of certain a priori concepts, and that they may include some that are more fundamental than any concept that is derivable from experience. But there is no getting away from the truth that the value of a concept to be employed in the interpretation of things would solely depend upon its applicability to them. This obviously brings out the supreme importance of science in the interpretation of the world. For whether a certain concept actually applies to things or not can be decided by science, and not by philosophy. Even if a concept to be employed in the interpretation of the world originates in philosophy, there should be a thorough scientific examination of its bearing upon actual facts before it can be made use of for that purpose. It cannot, therefore, be called a contribution of philosophy rather than of science. Moreover, there is hardly any reason for ascribing to philosophy the special privilege of evolving concepts that could serve as means of the interpretation of the world. On the contrary, the claim of science, especially physics, to this privilege seems to be the least disputable. It is, however, far from us to deny that the scientific interpretation of the world may, at any stage of its development, be inadequate or even defective, and, consequently, that it may stand in need of improvement or correction. But that would hardly be any reason for holding that the required improvement or correction should be effected somewhere outside the province of science and not come out of the labour of science itself. At any rate, in the understanding of the world from the purely theoretical standpoint, science seems to be supremely important, standing in no need of light from philosophy. Whether the world should be viewed from any other standpoint so that philosophy may adopt it and thereby acquire a special privilege to interpret the world in a manner that is denied to science is, however, a question that will be considered later.

It is of interest to notice in this connection that philosophy has sometimes arrived at a predominantly a priori interpretation of the world in the name of understanding it empirically, and science, which is avowedly empirical in outlook, has likewise fallen on occasion a victim to apriorism. What is of still greater interest is that both philosophy and science have at times come to stand on a common platform with a common a priori interpretation of the world between them. A typical example of such an interpretation of the world is the one that is based on the acceptance of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities. According to this interpretation, which was accepted by traditional physics under the lead of Newton and by many philosophers since the time of Democritus, the so-called primary qualities belong to the things which make up the physical world, whereas the so-called secondary qualities are mere effects produced in the human mind by physical things, and so cannot be said to belong to them. The physical world thus interpreted obviously comes to be reduced to one-half of what our day-to-day experience presents it to be.

Curiously, however, both the scientists and the philosophers concerned deluded themselves into the belief that the distinction between the two kinds of qualities is based entirely upon an empirical consideration, viz., that the secondary qualities like colour, smell, etc., as our experience testifies, are relative and variable, and that whatever is such may be real only as states of our mind, and not otherwise. But granted that the consideration thus stated is empirical, there is no getting away from admitting that a similar consideration easily holds good in the case of the so-called primary qualities, because they are, as our experience testifies equally well, relative and variable. This brings out the fact that the distinction between the primary and the secondary qualities is due to the arbitrary restriction of the application of the alleged empirical consideration to the latter qualities. And the reason for such restriction cannot be explained except in the light of the assumption that those qualities alone are essential to physical things themselves that are necessarily involved in our *conception* of them, and that such qualities are those which admit of mathematical treatment, viz., shape, size, etc., that is, the so-called primary qualities.

About this assumption it is, however, to be observed, in the first place, that it amounts to a gross misstatement of fact. For it is no more a fact that physical things are inconceivable apart from the primary

qualities than that they are so apart from the secondary qualities. Nor is it a fact that the primary qualities are conceivable apart from the secondary qualities any more than that the secondary qualities are conceivable apart from the primary ones. Secondly, this assumption, characterized by predilection for the mathematical properties of physical things as it undoubtedly is, betrays the a priori dogma that things really are what they are *conceived* to be, while the truth is that they are what they are *experienced* to be. However that may be, if from the strict empirical standpoint there be no reason to the contrary, any quality that we apprehend by means of sense-experience—and we do in this manner apprehend the so-called primary qualities as well as the so-called secondary qualities—should be regarded as essential to physical things. But if such reason there be from that very standpoint, perhaps no quality revealed by our sense-experience can be ascribed to the physical side of the world. In any case, if the deliverance of sense-experience must be superseded in the interpretation of the physical world, the standpoint from which this is to be done should be the empirical and not the a priori.

VIII

CAN PHILOSOPHY INTERPRET THE WORLD?

THOUGH a priori interpretation of the world, as we have seen above, is out of the question, it does not follow that man should rest content with the view of the world provided by his day-to-day experience and make no attempt to interpret it. On the contrary, endowed as he naturally is with the curiosity to know more and more about the world, it behoves him to interpret it, or, in other words, to understand it in terms of general principles otherwise called laws of Nature. But, then, the principles should not be inventions of his mind, but should rather be derived by him from his experience of the world with the aid of his intellect. This means that the principles of the interpretation of the world should be empirical—empirical not in the traditional sense which is conveyed by the supposed opposition between the a priori and the empirical, but in the comparatively modern sense which recognizes no rift between what is *conceived* and what is *experienced*.

Now, since the interpretation of the world should be empirical in the sense indicated above, and since the avowed aim of science is to offer such an interpretation, it seems that science has no branch of knowledge to compete with in respect of the fulfilment of this aim. But then, science, it may be contended, is incapable of interpreting the world finally and exhaustively, owing to the fact that it ignores several aspects of our experience which should naturally play a part in the complete understanding of the nature of the world. In particular, in interpreting the world, it may be pointed out, science only takes into account the deliverances of our cognitional experience, but leaves aside those of our non-cognitional experiences—moral, aesthetic and religious—without caring to enquire whether they can throw any light on the nature of the world. So, it may be urged, there should be a separate branch of knowledge to take special notice of the deliverances of these neglected

aspects of our experience with a view to ascertaining whether they can serve to offer a more comprehensive view of the world than that which science is competent to do. And the branch of knowledge in demand should obviously be philosophy. Thus may be opened the question of the possibility of the philosophical interpretation of the world as distinguished from the scientific. In dealing with this question, as we now propose to do, we are naturally required to consider the bearing of our moral, aesthetic and religious experiences upon the understanding of the world. To this end it is necessary to understand the nature and significance of these experiences themselves.

About our moral, aesthetic and religious experiences, it may be said, first, that they are in themselves mental phenomena, and, secondly, that they owe their origin to certain causes lying within the human mind as well as in the physical and social environment of man. Thus regarded, these experiences are, of course, worthy of investigation in some branch of knowledge or other. And it would perhaps not be going far from truth to hold, in agreement with a section of philosophers including the present-day logical positivists, that the branches of knowledge in question are psychology and sociology. In any case, it is to be admitted that these experiences present themselves as feelings and emotions, and, consequently, that they are stimuli to *action*, and do not seem to point to any *existence* beyond themselves and their causes. That being so, the conclusion to which we are driven is that they only serve to widen the scope of scientific knowledge, but can be of no use in respect of the furtherance of the cause of our knowledge of the world in an additional manner, especially by way of improvement upon the scientific view of the world. Unless philosophy, in its attempt to interpret the world, chooses to seek light in what is unilluminative and uncommunicative, it should, therefore, be well advised in not referring to these experiences at all. But in that case the philosophical interpretation of the world would be out of the question, or, even if it is still held to be possible, it would obviously be indistinguishable from that which science has to offer.

But while moral, aesthetic and religious experiences, as mental phenomena, are subjective states, the first two at least are inseparably bound up with a sense of *value* expressible in moral and aesthetic judgments respectively. This consideration obviously brings out an altogether new aspect of these two kinds of experience and thereby

tends to reopen the question of the possibility of the philosophical interpretation of the world on the basis of their deliverances. But the answer to this question would obviously depend upon the consideration of the nature and significance of moral and aesthetic judgments.

Now, as regards moral judgments, many ethical writers, especially the utilitarians, hold that they are translatable into judgments of empirical facts. They arrive at this view from the consideration that the rightness of actions and the goodness of ends are definable in terms of the pleasure, happiness or satisfaction that may accrue from the performance of the actions and the fulfilment of the ends. From this point of view, however, the investigation of our sense of moral value and its results would remain confined to psychology and sociology, and be of little use to philosophy in its attempt to interpret the world. Equally useless that investigation and its results would in this respect be if moral judgments are reduced to judgments of empirical fact in any other manner. And philosophy will have nothing to gain from the investigation of aesthetic value if it is conducted on a similar line. But then, it may be held, as it has sometimes been done, that the concepts of value are not empirical; nor does the validity of value-judgments admit of empirical verification. And this view seems at first sight to be of use to philosophy in its attempt to interpret the world in an independent manner. But in order to ascertain how far or whether at all this is really so, it is necessary to enquire into the various senses in which the concepts of value, especially that of moral value, may be said to be non-empirical.

In the first place, values, it may be held, while being irreducible to empirical facts, are not, on that account, ultimate, but are really deducible from a super-empirical existence. Secondly, they may be regarded as forming a close circle of genuine *a priori* concepts that are not only not reducible to any empirical fact but are uncommunicative with any super-empirical being or beings that there may be. Lastly, the fact that they do not admit of empirical interpretation may be taken to mean that they are not genuine concepts, whether empirical or *a priori*, but are mere figments of imagination.

Of these three senses of the non-empirical character of the concepts of value, the first alone is likely to be favourable to the claim of philosophy to interpret the world. But the difficulty is that this sense is

unacceptable for the simple reason that a value would lose its meaning altogether if it were reducible to, or deducible from, anything that is of the nature of *existence*, whether empirical or super-empirical. A *value* regarded as itself an existence or as pointing to an existence is at best a misnomer. And this goes to show that there is no road from the realm of value to the realm of existence. That being so, any manner of interpreting the existent order of the world in a super-empirical sense on the basis of the deliverance of our sense of value, be it theistic or otherwise, would be no less arbitrary than the naturalistic interpretation of the concepts of value. It is, therefore, most unlikely that philosophy can gain anything from the investigation of our sense of value, in respect of the fulfilment of its claim to improve upon the scientific view of the world.

This conclusion is, of course, one that would follow inevitably from the last of the three views of the concepts of value distinguished above, viz., that they are pseudo-concepts—a view that has recently been made current by some of the logical positivists. But so far as we are concerned, we do not endorse this view, nor do we wish to associate it with our decision about the problem of the philosophical interpretation of the world. According to logical positivism, the only genuine a priori concepts are those in logic and pure mathematics. With this view at its disposal it dismisses the possibility of metaphysics regarded as an enquiry into the supersensible, and of ethics and aesthetics as normative sciences. Further, it seems to recognize no enquiry into our sense of value as genuine except that which concerns our moral and aesthetic feelings and emotions and their causes. All this is indeed enough to shock philosophical orthodoxy. But that consideration should not be used as a weapon against the logical positivists' freedom of thought. What is, however, needed for our immediate purpose is to examine the assumptions on which their novel view of the concepts of value is based.

A. Logical Positivism and the Concept of Value

The propositions from which the logical positivists deduce their view of the concepts of value are: (1) all a priori concepts are mere linguistic symbols; (2) the concepts of value are not linguistic symbols; (3) considered by themselves they are not empirical either. Now, so far as

the last proposition is concerned, its truth cannot be seriously questioned. As regards the second, its truth is also unchallengeable, and its acceptance by these philosophers has enabled them to guard themselves against an absurdity.¹ So the question of the validity of their 'view of the concepts of value would reduce itself to that of the validity of the first proposition. In dealing with this question we are required to consider their view of the truths of logic and mathematics in as much as it is in consideration of the nature of these truths that they have come to hold that a priori concepts cannot but be mere linguistic symbols.

Now, the logical positivist holds, and quite rightly, that the truths of formal logic and pure mathematics are universal and necessary. But he goes further in affirming that these truths are analytic or tautologous. That being so, the propositions like '7 plus 5 is 12' must, in his view, be of the same nature as the propositions such as 'an eye-doctor is an oculist'. But he does not seem to be sure that, as in the case of the latter the thought of the subject necessarily involves the thought of the predicate, so in the case of the former the same thing does hold good. In fact, he himself admits that this may not be so.² He does not, however, regard the difficulty arising therefrom as serious, but, in fact, seeks to avoid it by stating that if in the case of propositions like '7 plus 5 is 12', the thought of the subject does not involve the thought of the predicate, it only means that the subject and the predicate in them have not the same 'subjective intension'. So, if these propositions are to be called synthetic, they may be so called in a psychological sense, but not in the logical, in which sense they, according to him, are analytic. But the difficulty of the logical positivist lies in that a situation which is strictly logical is taken by him to be purely psychological. For that the subject and the predicate in these propositions do not have the same subjective intension is not a mere matter of fact, but one of logical necessity. That they *cannot* have the same subjective intension is really the reason why they *do not actually* have it. Moreover, to say that a

¹ We are so far unaware of any attempt made anywhere to evolve a body of symbols in ethics and aesthetics similar to that which is a characteristic feature of logic and mathematics. But even if philosophers one day make so bold as to declare ethics and aesthetics to be purely symbolic, there need be no cause for worry or anxiety. For, it may be shown, and we shall also try to show, that even logic and mathematics, in which symbols are indispensably necessary, do not deal merely with symbols.

² Vide A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 78.

proposition is analytic or synthetic according as the thought of its subject does or does not involve the thought of its predicate seems to be only another way of expressing the same thing as is expressed by saying that a proposition is analytic or synthetic according as its contradictory is inconceivable or conceivable. That being so, the former distinction must be strictly logical, because the latter is undoubtedly so.

We are thus led to appreciate the truth of the view held by Kant, the view that propositions like '7 plus 5 is 12', though universal and necessary like the propositions such as 'an eye-doctor is an oculist', are, unlike the latter, synthetic and not, as the logical positivist holds, analytic. In holding this view Kant seems to have been aware of a truth which has escaped the notice of the majority of philosophers, including the logical positivists, viz., that there are two distinct principles (not one only) either of which, as the case may be, constitutes the logical basis of universal and necessary propositions. His only shortcoming was that he could not tell us what exactly the logical principle is, which is to be treated as co-ordinate with the principle of identity. But that cannot be a reason for ignoring the distinction between the two kinds of a priori propositions, the analytic and the synthetic, and for reducing the latter to the former. To do so would really be as arbitrary and unwarrantable as to ignore the distinction between an a priori and an empirical proposition, and to reduce the latter to the former merely on account of the inability of philosophers before Leibniz to discover the logical principle co-ordinate with the principle of identity, which could be regarded as the logical basis of empirical propositions.

In fact, just as Leibniz did a signal service to philosophy by adding the law of sufficient reason to the list of the fundamental principles of judgment handed down by tradition, so did Kant by pointing to the necessity of the addition of another principle on which a priori synthetic judgments could be said to be based. Although Kant himself did not name the principle in question, his notion of a priori synthesis may be utilized in this connection, and that principle may, accordingly, be called the law of a priori synthesis. The admission of this principle would obviously remove the inadequacy of the logical positivist's view that the inconceivability of the contradictory of a proposition is the sole criterion of the universality and necessity of that proposition. And it would do so by bringing out the truth that just as some propositions

such as 'an eye-doctor is an oculist' are universal and necessary because of the fact that their contradictory is inconceivable and empirically unverifiable, so some others, like '7 plus 5 is 12', are equally universal and necessary because of the fact that their contradictory or any exception to them is empirically unverifiable, but not, as the logical positivist holds, inconceivable.

It seems, however, that the logical positivist's view of the truths of formal logic and pure mathematics as analytic is only a means of the fulfilment of his main object, which is to show that metaphysics is an impossibility. The possibility of metaphysics, it is needless to point out, demands the admission of a kind of super-empirical judgment. One of the means, in fact, too simple a means, of denying that possibility would naturally be to assert that there can be no such thing as an a priori judgment, whether analytic or synthetic. But since the adoption of this means would lead to the impossibility of not only metaphysics but also formal logic and pure mathematics, philosophers have seldom had recourse to it. Those who, like the logical positivist, still wished to deny the possibility of metaphysics had, therefore, to devise such means as could serve to safeguard the position of formal logic and pure mathematics. Accordingly, the logical positivist has found in his peculiar view of the nature of the truths of formal logic and pure mathematics the means in demand. Since, as he seems to argue, a body of a priori truths, like formal logic or pure mathematics, relates exclusively to symbols without reference to any content whatsoever, metaphysics, which claims to deal not with symbols but with contents of a super-empirical nature, cannot be possible.

Another point to be considered in this connection relates to the logical positivist's understanding of how his view of all a priori truths as analytic affects formal logic and pure mathematics, the sciences which deal with truths of this kind. According to him, what happens in this respect is that there arises the problem: how the truths of these sciences are 'true, useful and surprising'.¹ Now, as regards this problem, it is to be observed that it is due not merely to the alleged fact that the truths of these sciences are all analytic, but to the more fundamental fact that they are all a priori, no matter whether analytic or synthetic. However that may be, the problem in its present form obviously relates to the *bearing* of these sciences upon our intercourse with the world in

¹ Vide A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, pp. 72-3.

general and our knowledge of it in particular, and not to these sciences themselves. But no matter how it is dealt with, there arises another problem in connection with the logical positivist's view of the truths of formal logic and pure mathematics as all analytic, which concerns these sciences themselves, but which is ignored by him—the problem whether these sciences viewed to be exclusively concerned with analytic truths can be called sciences in the strict sense.

It is in view of this problem that Kant came to hold that analytic truths alone cannot constitute a science, and that a science, strictly speaking, is a body of synthetic truths. And he had no doubt in his mind about the fact that there are certain *a priori* contents to which the truths of mathematics—especially those of geometry—relate, and that these truths are, on that account, synthetic, while being *a priori*.¹ In view of this position of Kant, the logical positivist, in order to justify his view that formal logic and pure mathematics deal exclusively with analytic truths, should have undertaken to show that there are no *a priori* contents with which the truths of these sciences can be said to be concerned. But instead of doing this, he seems simply to argue that since the truths of these sciences are empty of *factual* content, they are without any content whatsoever, and are concerned merely with symbols. This position, it is needless to point out, is precisely the one that suits the logical positivist's convenience in as much as it denies the possibility of *a priori* synthetic judgments in the fields of formal logic and pure mathematics and thereby prepares the ground for the denial of the possibility of metaphysics regarded as a body of *a priori* synthetic judgments.

The fact, however, is that formal logic and pure mathematics have a certain kind of contents to deal with, and yet that these contents are expressible in symbols. But symbolization is not peculiar to the provinces of formal logic and pure mathematics; it is inseparable from the very nature of thought. Our thought being unavoidably linguistic, the contents of all our thought and judgment, whether logical or mathematical or otherwise, are subject to symbolization. Only the nature and degree of their symbolization vary from one case to another, owing to

¹ Kant's admission of 'pure intuitions' of geometry indeed prevented him from recognizing the truly abstract character of geometry, and of mathematics in general, and led him to advocate the erroneous view of mathematics as an *intuitional* science. Nevertheless, it testifies to his realization of the truth that mathematics is not restricted to the treatment of mere symbols, but has a certain kind of *a priori* contents to deal with.

their respective peculiarities. So the mere fact that the contents of the judgments in formal logic and pure mathematics admit of symbolization is not sufficient to establish the view that these sciences are purely symbolic or that they are the only symbolic sciences.

The foregoing discussion brings out the untenability of the logical positivist's view that all a priori concepts are empty of content, and are nothing but linguistic symbols. Hence is established the falsity of the argument on which is based his view that the concepts of value are pseudo-concepts.¹ But even then, we are far from having proved that the concepts of value are genuine a priori concepts—concepts which, while lacking contents of an empirical nature, bear those of a non-empirical kind. For, no matter how our aesthetic consciousness be treated of, our moral consciousness at least, it may be contended, is such that the question of content, whether empirical or a priori, is absolutely irrelevant in its case. This indicates the line on which Kant developed his ethical position which it would be worth while to discuss separately.

B. Kant and the Concept of Moral Value

In his treatment of the problem of morality, Kant starts with the idea that moral consciousness concerns *doing* or *action*, which, howsoever related to *knowledge* and *feeling*, is essentially distinct from either. In consequence, he holds the view that moral consciousness does not admit of understanding on the analogy of, or with reference to, knowledge and feeling, but needs an altogether separate treatment. Accordingly, he states that, whereas the field of knowledge is concerned with cognitive judgments, a priori and empirical—that is, judgments about relations of ideas and about matters of fact—the field of morality is free of the question of judgment in either of these senses, so that a moral judgment is unconcerned with any matter of fact or any a priori content. And, further, a moral judgment cannot be a mere expression of feeling either. By such a process of elimination Kant arrives at the position that a moral judgment cannot but be an expression of that which may be regarded as alone appropriate to doing or action, viz., an imperative or a command. Thus, according to Kant, the judgment 'this action is right' neither refers to the pleasure or happiness that may

¹ *Vide ante*, pp. 193-4.

result from the performance of the action, nor reveals what may be called moral value regarded as something irreducible to any empirical fact, nor is the mere expression of a feeling of approval. It simply means that the action is one that *must be done*. Kant was, however, aware that imperatives hold good not only in the field of morality but in other fields. Consequently, he was required to distinguish the moral imperative from the non-moral ones. And this he did in terms of the view that the former, unlike the latter, is categorical or unconditional and also unerring. Kant's ethical position, then, is briefly this, that moral consciousness is as empty of content as unconnected with feeling, and that it delivers itself of an imperative or command to action, which, owing to its essential unconditionality, is unique and without parallel.

It is thus evident that Kant kept the door closed, and quite rightly, to the possibility of the reduction of moral judgments to judgments of empirical fact as well as to mere expressions of feeling. But it seems that he left the objectivity or universal validity of moral judgments unaccounted for. The source of a moral imperative, as distinguished from a religious or political or social one, should naturally be an individual himself. That being so, a moral imperative, granted that it is unconditional and unerring, should be so to the individual in whom it originates, and not necessarily to others. It may very well be that the moral imperative is not the same in all individuals, but different in different individuals. Consequently, no moral imperative can surely be universally unconditional and unerring; nor can any moral judgment be said to be universally valid. The appeal to the universality of human reason, which is, of course, conveyed by Kant's conception of the moral faculty as rational, is, however, of no avail here, nor is it any remedy for the difficulty in which he thus lands himself. For reason, though it is specially privileged to contribute universality, can do that not as bare reason but as the bearer of an a priori or universal content. To call moral consciousness rational and yet to conceive of it as empty of content, as Kant does, is really to leave out of account the universality of the moral imperative and the objective validity of moral judgments in the name of accounting for both. In fact, Kant's present difficulty is due to his failure to realize that an imperative cannot be objective except in so far as its appeal is not confined to this individual or that individual, but extends to all, and that this is possible on one

condition only, viz., that it bears a content, and a content that is a priori or universal.

The main difficulty of Kant's ethical position, however, lies in his exaggeration of the difference between moral consciousness and knowledge by means of the conception of them as mutually opposed. It is as a result of this step that he held moral consciousness to be empty of content and thereby came to dismiss the concept of moral value as such. Of course, he realized the truth that moral consciousness is devoid of empirical content. But, in his anxiety to prevent the possibility of the reduction of moral judgments to judgments of fact, he went to an extreme in declaring moral consciousness to be absolutely contentless, without stopping to enquire whether there is any a priori content with which moral consciousness may be said to be bound up. Such a procedure he was, however, least expected to adopt. On the contrary, as one who admitted a priori contents in the case of mathematical knowledge as well as in that of the scientific understanding of the world, he should have found it equally reasonable to admit similar contents in the case of moral consciousness. And this for the simple reason that moral principles have no less clear, direct and intimate a bearing upon a kind of fact, viz., human conduct, than mathematical and scientific truths have upon another, viz., the phenomena of Nature.

Further, in so far as he regarded applicability to facts as an essential characteristic of a priori synthetic principles, he should have held that moral principles come under this category, and not that they are expressions of bare imperatives about which the question of *why* must be under an everlasting veto. Had Kant held this view, he could still have maintained his unmistakable idea of the fundamental difference between moral consciousness and knowledge, on the understanding that this difference does not relate to the nature of the judgments in the two respective spheres, but to the peculiarity of the contents to which the judgments have respectively to refer. The reason why Kant held a view radically different from this is, however, to be found in his preconceived idea that moral consciousness yields a way of belief free from the restraint of cognitive judgment, whether a priori or empirical, which is the only means of our access to the realm of supersensible reality.

It is of interest to note that, on the question of morality, the logical positivists are, in a sense, in agreement with Kant. By declaring the

concept of moral value to be a pseudo-concept, they find themselves in a position to hold, like Kant, that moral consciousness is empty of content. And, on this account, they are also entitled to the Kantian view that moral consciousness is in a class apart from knowledge, whether a priori or empirical, and that moral judgment is fundamentally different from cognitive judgment, whether about matters of fact or about relations of ideas. But then, their difference from Kant on the problem of morality is fundamental so as to render their agreement with him absolutely meaningless. Kant held that moral consciousness is essentially the sense of duty. And, by conceiving of the sense of duty as the sense of obedience to a kind of imperative, he regarded moral judgment as nothing but the expression of the moral imperative. The logical positivists, on the other hand, hold that a moral judgment is a mere expression of feeling. And in this they obviously base themselves on the assumption that moral consciousness is essentially a kind of feeling, the very thing which Kant regarded as foreign to this consciousness, on the understanding that it is no part of the meaning of the concept of duty. Granted, however, that Kant is not right in excluding feeling from his conception of duty and in reducing the sense of duty to the sense of obedience to an imperative, there is no getting away from the fact that the sense of duty is, in some sense or other, essential to moral consciousness, and that it is not wholly reducible to a mode of feeling. So moral judgments, if they are not mere expressions of an imperative, cannot be mere expressions of feeling either.

But even granted that moral consciousness is essentially a kind of feeling, and moral judgments are but expressions of feeling, the question naturally arises as to how we are to distinguish between the feeling that is to be designated as moral and that which cannot be said to bear that designation, and between those expressions of feeling that are moral judgments and those that are non-moral ones. This is obviously an inconvenient question for the logical positivist to face; and it is perhaps on this account that Ayer puts his veto on the discussion of 'moral experience' within ethical theory. In fact, the logical positivist has no reply to offer to this question, because feeling qua feeling admits of differences of degree but not those of kind, reference to which is demanded by the reply. But Kant found it easy to save himself from such a difficulty, in so far as he admitted the categorical imperative in distinction from the hypothetical ones. This, however, goes to show

that the logical positivist's view of moral judgments as mere expressions of feeling is further away from the truth about the nature of these judgments than Kant's view of them as mere expressions of the categorical imperative. Nevertheless, as previously seen, Kant left the objective validity of moral judgments out of account. But in this respect the position of the logical positivist is worse than that of Kant. For of all the modes of consciousness, feeling is the most private and relative, and undoubtedly more so than the imperative that is said to be delivered by moral consciousness regarded as devoid of feeling. This is, of course, ruinous to the logical positivist's ethical theory. One redeeming feature of their attitude towards the problem of morality, however, seems to be that ethical theory, in their hands, is not, as it was in the hands of Kant, a means of the vindication of the possibility of metaphysics. But on this account they have hardly any claim to credit. For they do not seem to have arrived at their ethical theory as a result of an independent and unprejudiced investigation of the problem of morality. On the contrary, they have conducted their investigation of this problem so as to fulfil their main purpose, viz., to eliminate metaphysics, just as Kant did his so as to fulfil the opposite purpose, viz., to vindicate the possibility of metaphysics.

C. The Significance of Moral Consciousness

The above discussion may first be summed up thus. The view that moral value is reducible to an empirical fact or facts is untenable on the ground that it involves the arbitrary understanding of moral consciousness on the analogy of knowledge or rather empirical knowledge. Equally untenable is the view, according to which moral consciousness is merely a kind of feeling, in as much as it denies the truth that this consciousness is no more reducible to feeling than to knowledge. But apart from the question of the truth or falsity of these views, neither of them is of any use to philosophy in its attempt to interpret the universe in a manner unknown to science. Now, of the views according to which moral value is not reducible to any empirical fact, one holds that it cannot, on this account, be said to be ultimate, but is really deducible from a kind of super-empirical being. Another displays striking originality in holding the view that the concept of moral value lacks literal sense, and moral consciousness is empty of content, empirical or a priori, factual or ideal, and that it is the source of belief as opposed to

knowledge—belief that serves to reveal the entire realm of super-sensible reality which is for ever hidden from theoretical understanding or knowledge. Both these views are, of course, of great use to philosophy in the fulfilment of its aim to reach a view of the world which neither common sense nor science can yield. But if philosophy chooses to fulfil this aim by having recourse to either of these two views, she would, as we have previously argued, commit herself to a gross misunderstanding of the nature of moral consciousness and of the concept of moral value. We are then left with the second of the three views of the nature of moral value we have previously distinguished.¹ Let us now try to lay bare its implications with a view to ascertaining whether the consideration of moral consciousness enables philosophy to improve upon the scientific interpretation of the world.

To say that moral value is not reducible to any empirical *fact* nor deducible from any super-empirical *being*, but is a genuine a priori content, seems to be the same thing as to say that it is of the nature of an *ideal* towards which the conduct of man should be directed. From this point of view, moral judgments only express whether or not the ideal in question finds realization in the practical affairs of the individual and society. The necessity of the ideal or ideals arises out of the peculiarity of human nature. But the world in which the stage for human conduct is set is the world of our day-to-day experience. Of course, it is given to man to form, in terms of his ideal or ideals, an outlook on the world different from, and even higher than, what is provided for by his ordinary experience. But the ideals cannot be said to descend upon the existent order of the universe, and to form part of, or to create a super-empirical atmosphere within, it. For in that case the ideals would obviously cease to be ideals, and the distinction between man's natural inclination and his higher aspirations would be obliterated. The fact is that a value or an ideal is a thing to which man should, as it were, ascend from the existent order of the universe. But if we should speak of an ideal as descending upon the world of existence, we may do so only on the understanding that a part of that world, viz., man, while belonging to it, is apart from it in his pursuit of the ideals, and that as a result of this pursuit of man there may be progress in himself and in the rest of the world. This is only stating a fact which is empirically verifiable.

¹ *Vide ante*, p. 192.

So the information that can be gathered from the consideration of moral consciousness is that man is, in a sense, unique, distinct from the rest of the world in virtue of his vision of an ideal or ideals, and that the world, on account of the influence of human ideals upon it, is subject to a process of evolution, co-ordinate with the process of natural evolution, which may be called teleological. Any attempt to make use of moral consciousness in interpreting the world super-empirically or in detecting in it any feature which is not empirically verifiable and so falls outside of the scope of common sense or science should, therefore, be arbitrary and unwarrantable. In particular, the investigation of moral consciousness is not likely to provide any reason for interpreting the existent order of the world as divine.

*D. The Nature and Significance of
Religious Consciousness*

It now remains for us to enquire into the nature and significance of our religious consciousness with a view to ascertaining whether this aspect of our conscious life can reveal any inner secret of the world, hidden from our ordinary day-to-day knowledge or even scientific investigation, which philosophy may fall back upon in its attempt to interpret the world differently from science.

In dealing with this question it should, however, be borne in mind that neither the supposed inadequacy of the scientific interpretation of the world nor the so-called empirical manifestations of design can provide a sure argument for viewing the world as divine. This is nowadays admitted by philosophers in so far as they have come to realize that the existence of God can by no means be demonstratively proved. Our moral consciousness is also of no avail in this respect, because, as previously seen, it is unable to point to the existence of God. But may it not be that our religious consciousness unmistakably testifies to the reality of God, and that all reasonings pointing in the same direction are only ancillary to the testimony of this aspect of our consciousness? It is in view of this question that there arises the necessity of a separate enquiry into the implications of religious consciousness in connection with the problem of the philosophical interpretation of the world.

There is perhaps no doubt about the fact that religious consciousness, as an aspect of the conscious life of man, is as ultimate as any

other. The definition of religion as 'morality touched with emotion' is arbitrary, in as much as it is based on the understanding of moral consciousness as the foundation of religious consciousness. In fact, that which all men agree to call religion perhaps had little to do with morality in its strict sense till comparatively recent times. It is, however, true that the emotions of fear and wonder involved in religious consciousness necessitated investigation of the causes of the phenomena of Nature and led to the construction of hypotheses about her behaviour in order that fear might be warded off, bewilderment allayed and perplexity solved. But these hypotheses are only crude guesses which cannot, strictly speaking, serve as the means of our *knowledge* of the world. The fact is that science has been able to build up a system of truths about the world only through a successful struggle to emancipate itself from the shackles of religion. The relation of religious consciousness to aesthetic consciousness seems, however, to be more primitive and more intimate than its relation to knowledge and moral consciousness. Nevertheless, there is no denying the fact that aesthetic sentiment admits of development independently of religion; and this points to their mutual independence.

Our immediate task is, however, neither to enquire into the causes of man's religious sentiment nor to discuss whether religious belief is essential to human nature or it is otherwise, so that a time may come when man will, as a matter of course, relinquish this belief as an unnecessary or even harmful superstition, just as he has already discarded many other primitive beliefs. The question for us to consider here is whether religious consciousness considered as an essential aspect of the conscious life of man can serve as a means of interpreting the universe in a super-empirical sense, especially as divine.

Religious consciousness at all stages of its development is characterized by a certain mental attitude and a certain feeling or feelings, emotion or emotions produced by causes lying within human nature as well as in man's environment, which serve as stimuli to certain actions regarded as characteristically religious. All these things may, of course, be investigated and the investigation would obviously belong to psychology and sociology. Religious consciousness, like moral and aesthetic consciousness, may thus provide data for widening the range of scientific knowledge. But the question is whether more can be expected of it. In particular, can it provide any reason for interpreting the

world in a super-empirical sense? An affirmative answer to this question would obviously demand that the judgment: 'God exists', which is usually regarded as of fundamental importance in the field of religion, is true. But can this demand be fulfilled?

A judgment is, of course, true if it is empirically verifiable, if, that is to say, it points to, or corresponds with, an existence or existences that can be objects of experience. But so far as the present religious judgment is concerned, it cannot obviously be said to be true in this sense, despite some religious people's claim to have direct vision of, or immediate communication with, God. For God cannot be known by means of the kind of experience which is in demand in connection with empirical verification. But this may not really affect belief in the reality of God; because the question of empirical verification is not only irrelevant to this religious belief but repugnant to the religious sentiment. The judgment: 'God exists' cannot, however, be *a priori* either. It is not that no *a priori* judgment can be synthetic. On the contrary, mathematics at least, as we have previously seen, bears testimony to the possibility of *a priori* synthetic judgments. But the point is that no *a priori* judgment, no matter whether analytic or synthetic, can have concern with anything of the nature of *existence* as God is believed to be. This is precisely the reason why the judgment: 'God exists' cannot be *a priori*.

Since the judgment: 'God exists' is not empirically verifiable nor can be said to be characterized by *a priori* certainty, it seems that it is altogether meaningless. Hence the predicament of religious consciousness. But perhaps someone will even then try to vindicate religion by making bold to affirm that belief in God is the deliverance of an imperative—of course, a categorical one. This would obviously bring in the question whether a categorical imperative is available in the field of religious consciousness—a question which cannot, however, find an easy answer in the affirmative. But even granted that among the religious imperatives there are some that are categorical, there seems to be no getting away from the fact that they can only call for *actions* supposed to be meritorious from the religious point of view, and, consequently, that they presuppose, instead of being the source of, belief in the existence of God.

But can there be no imperative which may lead *indirectly*, though not directly, to belief in the existence of God? The pertinent reply is that

the imperative in demand cannot, for the reason explained above, be had from religious consciousness. But is it not available within the field of moral consciousness? To this question no answer by a simple 'yes' or 'no' is, however, possible, because it is doubtful whether morality, strictly speaking, can make room for any imperative within its sphere, and because, even if it can do so, the question still remains as to whether the so-called moral imperative or imperatives are of primary importance, or play only a subordinate part, in the conduct of the moral life of man. It seems, however, that imperatives, if not unnecessary, are, strictly speaking, unimportant in moral life, and that that which is of primary importance in it is moral value or rather the moral ideal which does not coerce, but attracts, the moral aspirant, does not deliver commands to be obeyed by him, but stands in need of being realized in his practical life.

But, granted for the sake of argument that morality is primarily a matter of imperative, is there any ground, it may be pertinent to ask, on which it can be held that the so-called moral imperative indirectly leads to belief in the existence of God, while directly calling for action? This question was answered in the negative by an ancient school of Indian Philosophy called *Mīmāṃsā*, in terms of the view that an imperative, in order that it may be strictly categorical and unconditionally binding upon the moral individual, should only bear upon action, and have no indirect implication, especially in the manner of pointing to the existence of God. Kant's answer would have also been the same had he been faithful to his own critical standpoint throughout his treatment of the problem of morality. But it is due to his deviation from this standpoint that his answer was in the affirmative. Kant's ethical position ended in the results of his attempt to synthesize the concept of duty with that of happiness, whereas, from his strict critical standpoint, he had conceived of morality as exclusive of happiness, and held that the problem of morality receives final solution in the admission of the categorical imperative conveying the percept: 'duty for duty's sake'. Indeed, it is curious that Kant, who once realized that duty alone is within our control and all-important in our moral life, while happiness is beyond our control, and even held that the desire for it is antithetical to the sense of duty, should afterwards have seriously taken up the problem of the synthesis of duty with happiness. This problem, from his critical standpoint, is obviously not purely moral, but relates to

the combination of *morality* with *prudence*. Yet he consented to the relaxation of the rigour of his ethical enquiry by addressing himself to the solution of this new problem. And he did this presumably on the tacit understanding that he could thereby vindicate religion in its usually accepted sense, which demands the reality of God and the immortality of the soul. But this procedure of Kant obviously amounted to bending, contrary to his original intention, the consideration of morality to the service of popular religious opinion.

But still the philosopher, who is bent upon vindicating belief in the existence of God and thereby securing the view of the world as spiritual and divine, may turn back upon the concept of value in general and moral value in particular. And dissatisfied with the idea of an unborne value, he may just put forward the plea for the admission of the reality of God regarded as the bearer of the values including moral value. This refers us to the story that has been told in the history of philosophy through a pretty long period of philosophers' dissatisfaction with the scientific interpretation of the world mainly on the alleged ground that it is inadequate. It is, however, neither possible within the short space at our disposal, nor perhaps necessary, to consider the details of what has been said on this subject. Suffice it to point out that to raise the question of the bearer of the values is perhaps no less absurd than to ask: 'On what does the earth rest?' In fact, a value as borne by a person, whether human or divine, is its translation into a fact and hence its destruction, so that the very question of its bearer carries with it the danger of its annihilation, instead of the assurance of its safety.

It seems, therefore, that there is no getting away from accepting the position that the judgment: 'God exists', since it is existential, affirming as it does the *existence* of a thing, should for the determination of its validity submit to the test which is alone appropriate in the case of judgments of its kind, viz., empirical verification. But since it does not admit of empirical verification, it cannot be said to be objectively valid. But even then, logic should submit to wisdom, and the philosopher should be so wise as not to blame anyone who remains steadfast in his belief in the existence of God. From this point of view, the preaching of atheism, which, we are afraid, is fast coming into fashion, is undesirable, and no less so than the preaching of the religion of God, which in the past had been in vogue on a large scale and has not yet gone altogether out of fashion.

The question, however, remains whether there is anything about religious consciousness which is universal and survives all doubts and disputes. The answer is already determined in part by our conclusion pointing to the uncertainty about the reality of God. If no proof of His reality is vouchsafed unto us, the religious consciousness itself remains ever real with us in the shape of a peculiar mental attitude. In fact, the only indubitable information that religious consciousness can deliver to us relates not to the existence of God but to the reality of a certain mental attitude of our own. This is, of course, disappointing to those philosophers who are anxious to make use of religious consciousness in their attempt to interpret the world differently from science. Equally disappointing should it be to the religious man who, out of the excess of his religious zeal, wishes to find in the world a spiritual atmosphere pervaded by the power, love and benevolence of God. But if the religious man could only rise above fanaticism so as to maintain the balance of his religious faith, he would derive genuine comfort from the true meaning of religious consciousness which may be brought out as follows.

Religious consciousness differs from cognitive consciousness, but agrees to a degree with moral and aesthetic consciousness in that it is characterized by the primacy of the self. But even then, it is in a class apart from all these three aspects of conscious life on account of its sheer recalcitrance to externalization, to its being brought to bear upon, or its being dominated by, anything that is of the nature of not-self. It is essentially inward and completely lacking in outwardness. Yet religion presents itself, almost at all stages of its development, in an externalized form. This is due to an inexplicable tendency on the part of religious consciousness to make amends for its inherent lack of outwardness by feeding itself upon the relevant deliverances of the various kinds of outward consciousness—the cognitive, the moral and the aesthetic. An additional source from which religious consciousness acquires outwardness consists of certain social factors that are wont to translate the purely spiritual demands of man into elements of social structure. In consequence, religion in its usual sense is generally a social phenomenon, and its quality varies with the variation of the quality of the social atmosphere in which it subsists as well as that of the various kinds of outward consciousness on which it feeds itself.

The last consideration easily serves to distinguish between the lower and the higher forms of religion. Religions, like animism, fetishism, etc., which are usually regarded as lower forms of religion, rest upon the perceptual plane of individual and social consciousness dominated by instincts and emotions, whereas the theistic religions, which are generally recognized as higher forms of religion, have their foundation in the ideational plane characterized by the free play of the nobler sentiments. This, of course, provides sufficient reason for our general preference of theism to the so-called lower forms of religion. But then, in view of the consideration that religion is really inward, and only appears to be outward, and, consequently, that it is beyond truth and falsity, it would be arbitrary and unwarranted to hold that theism is true and the so-called lower forms of religion are false, or that the former is truer than the latter. What is, however, curious is that religion is often held to be useful or productive of utility by those who profess it. This is, indeed, a curious situation. But what is still more so is that the utility or pragmatic value that is supposed to result from religion is sometimes regarded as the test of the truth of religion itself. Accordingly, the more useful to the individual and society a religion is supposed to be, the truer it is considered to be, and the less is its usefulness to both, the less true it is judged to be. But, strictly speaking, the question of the degree of truth or of the distinction between truth and falsity is irrelevant in the case of religion.

Religion, which is really inward and lacks outwardness, should naturally stand above the distinction between truth and falsity, and be free from the limitations of value, extrinsic and intrinsic, lower and higher—utility, goodness and beauty. In fact, from common sense to science, from science to moral consciousness and again from moral consciousness to aesthetic consciousness there runs, in obedience to a spiritual demand for freedom from bondage, a process of gradual relaxation of the subjection of man to the objective order of the world. But even at the stage of aesthetic consciousness that demand remains unfulfilled, and man is still in bondage. So, if complete freedom from bondage is ever realizable, it can be realized only in a state which transcends outside determination in every form—determination due to fact as well as value. And if religious consciousness be not illusory, but a genuine inward phenomenon with a distinct significance of its own, it alone should be said to provide the state in demand.

Religion viewed in the proper perspective is then a state in which man is really himself. It marks the return of the human self to itself on the successful termination of the adventures that need to be undergone by it in order that it may qualify itself for admission into the religious state. If religion in this sense be the final destination of man, it becomes evident that the religious state does not come off of itself, and that those alone can be truly religious who have enthusiastically and joyfully undergone the required adventures. But it is a fact, however curious it may be, that the demand for religion is universal. In consequence, religion generally falls from its height of purity and comes to live in the field of man's adventures where he is in bondage and where true religion cannot be born. This explains why religion, which, strictly speaking, consists in the self's coming back to itself, produces a show of man's release from bondage by calling into existence a link between him and a supposed superhuman being or beings, by bringing the belief in God to bear upon the adventures of man, and, in particular, by leading the enquiring spirit of man to interpret the world in a super-empirical sense, viz., as divine.

E. Conclusion

Philosophy has somehow come to regard the understanding of the world as a whole as its proper business; and it has, during a long period of its history, been usual with it to pass on from common sense to science and from science to moral, aesthetic and religious consciousness in search of truths about the world. But in following this procedure it has remained unconscious of the fact that the steps, thus taken ahead of common sense, mark the gradual emancipation of the human mind from the influence of the outside world rather than enable it to discover the world as it is in itself. Strictly speaking, philosophy, in so far as it understands the world in terms of the deliverances of moral, aesthetic and religious consciousness, does not thereby get at the world as it actually is, but only secures a picture of what it *should be* for man as gifted with moral, aesthetic and religious sentiments. Any manner of the understanding of the world which departs from common sense to any extent or degree is bound to suffer more or less from a defect of this kind. For attaining to a truly objective view of the world we are, therefore, required to work our way backwards step by step from religious consciousness until we arrive at science. And it is at the stage

of our regress to science that we are confronted with the question whether we should stop at science or go further back to common sense for securing a strictly objective view of the world. In dealing with this question we have to consider the meaning of common sense and scientific thought and to ascertain the relation between the two.

In a wide sense the term 'common sense' means the plain man's complete outlook on the world, which is determined not only by his knowledge about it but by his feelings, emotions and beliefs. But since we are at present concerned with the question of our knowledge of the world, and since, as we have already seen, the non-cognitive attitudes, neither in their less developed form in the plain man nor in their more developed form in men of education and culture, should really be of any consequence to the understanding of the world, this wide sense of the term is not germane to the present context. We should rather understand the term in its restricted sense as the plain man's cognitive attitude towards the world. But, then, we should not lose sight of the fact that even the cognitive attitude of the plain man, like that of philosophers in general, is usually tied down to uncritical and arbitrary interpretations of facts. This seems to be due to the influence of some purpose or purposes other than the understanding of the true nature of the world. Nevertheless, it may not be impossible to secure an understanding of the world based on the discovery of facts themselves, and unmixed with any arbitrary manipulation or uncritical interpretation of them—an understanding which may well be taken to constitute common-sense knowledge of the world. To this end it is obviously necessary to separate facts from their uncritical interpretation and to present them in their true nature. It seems, however, that these requirements cannot be fulfilled except through the agency of scientific thought. The aim of scientific thought, as is well known, is to present facts in the perspective of laws, laws derived as far as possible from an objective consideration of facts, so that the scientific understanding of the world is, at least in principle, unexceptionable. The laws as formulated by science at any stage of its development may, of course, be inadequate and may fail to express the true nature of facts. But since the facts themselves are always there for the scientist to consider, no defect or shortcoming of the scientific interpretation of the world can endure or go unchallenged for ever. And, sooner or later, truths about facts must come to be unfolded by science unless the very idea of the

scientific understanding of the world is delusive, which is, however, most unlikely.

What has been said above is, however, far from conveying the suggestion that the world as conceived of by science is distinct from what it is to common sense. The truth seems to be just the contrary. When, for example, the physicist informs us that a physical thing, in a deeper analysis, is a system of electrons, he does not really ask us to treat the thing as something other than what it is ordinarily known to be. Our ordinary knowledge of the world indeed concerns particular facts. But my knowledge of a particular fact, in order that it may be the knowledge of that fact itself, should not be anything peculiar to me, but should rather be, as it were, anyone's knowledge of it. It is precisely this consideration that governs scientific thought. The scientific concepts or the laws formulated by science are, however, no part of the world itself, but only general ways of expressing particular facts or means of the discovery of facts themselves. Scientific thought, which thus seems, in a sense, to transcend the world of facts, does not do so in the literal sense, because it cannot be worth the name if it is not faithful to facts as far as possible.

It seems then that it makes no real difference whether, in our search after the truths about the world, we stop at science or go further back to common sense. For, strictly speaking, common-sense knowledge of the world is not available without the aid of science. Nor can there be any sense in adopting a means, viz., science, without the idea of an end, viz., common-sense knowledge otherwise characterizable as common knowledge of us all. That scientific thought is only the means of knowing facts in isolation from the irrelevant and uncritical beliefs that are usually imposed upon them has, however, been ignored more often than not, and instead the view has sometimes been held that it is a constituent of knowledge as such. In particular, Kant, while he realized that the 'understanding' or scientific thought has no data to contribute to our knowledge of the world, missed the truth that it cannot, for that very reason, be said to form part of knowledge, and was misled into the view that scientific thought is constitutive of knowledge. In this respect our non-cognitive consciousness, moral, aesthetic or religious, has, however, an advantage over scientific thought. As previously seen, in all these three forms it contributes data, the investigation of which leads to the extension of the scope of

knowledge. But, then, it should on no account be held that it has the additional advantage of lending a super-empirical significance to the existent order of the world which is outside the competence of science to do. The reason for this is to be found not only in the considerations which we have already tried to bring to light but in the unseemly consequence that would follow from this view, viz., the conflict between science and philosophy. Science obviously seeks to present the world as it *is* in distinction from the world as it *should be*. On the other hand, philosophy, in so far as it views the world in the moral, aesthetic and religious perspectives, can thereby secure only an ideal picture of the world which, strangely enough, is allowed by it to pass for a faithful representation of the world as it is. Hence the conflict between science and philosophy which cannot but be deplored.

It is then not by going beyond common-sense knowledge of the world, but by serving to disentangle facts about the world from irrational and irrelevant beliefs about it, that science promotes the cause of our knowledge of the world. In fact, no knowledge of the world is worth the name which is found not to conform to the results arrived at by science through this process. Any departure from the scientific view of the world is mere opinion which may be satisfying to our emotional attitude but cannot be said to yield truths about the nature of the world. We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that the solution of the problem of our knowledge of the external world rests entirely with common sense as aided by science, and that philosophy, whatever else its business may be, cannot be said to be concerned with this problem.

Part Three

WHAT, THEN, IS PHILOSOPHY?

INTRODUCTION

LET us now try to ascertain the position of philosophy, keeping in view the main conclusions we have already arrived at in these essays. The world, so far as our ordinary belief about it goes, comprises selves on the one hand and the physical world on the other—either qualitatively different from, and so irreducible to, the other. That being so, it would obviously be arbitrary to raise the problem which philosophy in the name of metaphysics has discussed for ages, and into which science has drifted from time to time, following the example of metaphysics—the problem: which is the more ultimate of the two, mind and matter? Viewed in this perspective, spiritualism, which exorcises the independent reality of the physical world and regards it as ultimately belonging to the side of mind, and materialism, which condemns mind to a mere aspect or function of matter, are but solutions of a pseudo-problem. The concept of evolution, whether mechanistic or teleological or emergent, which has generally been employed in the solution of this problem, of course, deserves respect. But that cannot hide the arbitrariness of the problem. For, while it can hardly be doubted that the physical and biological world is a fit object for evolutionary investigation, it seems difficult to believe that the self and this world can be taken together and made into one subject-matter for the evolutionist to study. Epistemologically, the physical and biological world is related to the self as its ‘other’—which brings to light a kind of relation which is unique, and cannot subsist between one physical thing and another, between one not-self and another. Moreover, the self, in virtue of its possession of the moral, aesthetic and religious attitudes, as we have previously seen, falls apart from the rest of the world and so cannot be regarded as a co-partner with the physical and biological world in singing the glory of the evolutionary process. On these two accounts, even granting that there is no other, the possibility

of metaphysics regarded as an attempt to solve the problem under consideration cannot be admitted.

If the self is qualitatively dissimilar to the physical world, it does not, however, necessarily follow, nor do we need to hold, that they are mutually exclusive so as to preclude the possibility of any relation between them. Mere dissimilarity, unless it is already taken to include mutual exclusiveness, cannot be a sufficient ground for the admission of division between two dissimilar things. In any case, the self and the physical world are both existents, and the existence of the latter is ascertained *directly* from experience, and that of the former, as we shall see later, indirectly from the same source. That being so, whether there is any relation between them or not is to be determined by means of empirical verification. And the fact is that the view of them as mutually exclusive is empirically false, because physical things, as our experience unmistakably testifies, act upon our self in our sense-perception, and, contrarily, our self acts upon our body as well as the physical world in our volitional actions. Hence the falsity of the view which admits a gulf separating the self from the physical world.

II

PHILOSOPHY AS EPISTEMOLOGY

THE above conclusion would, however, produce an adverse effect upon the position of that branch of philosophy which is known as epistemology—epistemology, of course, in the sense that prevails. Usually, epistemology is regarded as the enquiry into the possibility of knowledge. But, as we have seen in our earlier essays, the enquiry in this form, in so far as it relates to our knowledge of the external world, is ultimately based upon the purely a priori and empirically false hypothesis known as dualism of mind and matter, and hence is unwarranted and uncalled for. So it follows that if philosophy, regarded as an attempt to decide the so-called metaphysical issue as to whether the world is ultimately spiritual or material, is an absurdity, it is no less so when regarded as an attempt to solve the so-called epistemological problem concerning the possibility of our knowledge of the external world.

The absurdity of epistemology in its usual sense is, however, all the more striking in so far as it addresses itself to the treatment of the additional problem of the possibility of our knowledge of the self. Our knowledge of the external world is a matter of actual fact which needs to be accepted as such without any question being raised about its possibility. Hence the absurdity of the problem of the possibility of our knowledge of the external world. Nevertheless, actuality, while obviously precluding impossibility, includes possibility, though it is something more than that. So this problem is not absurd in the sense that it relates to the possibility of an impossibility. But the problem concerning the possibility of self-knowledge is absurd precisely in this sense. Of course, we do affirm the existence of our self. But that does not go to establish that our knowledge of our self is a fact in the same sense as our knowledge of the external world. Strictly speaking, our affirmation of the existence of our self is not based on our knowledge of it as an object, but is a necessary implication of our knowledge of

outer things as objects. Regarded as a kind of object-consciousness, self-knowledge is an impossibility, so that the problem of the possibility of self-knowledge, which epistemology usually undertakes to solve, is not only not parallel to, or co-ordinate with, the problem relating to the possibility of outer knowledge, but, unlike the latter, concerns the possibility of an impossibility.

Yet epistemology as a branch of philosophy is possible, but in a sense different from that in which it is usually understood. In so far as we do know what alone is the fit object for us to know, viz., the external world, no problem arises for epistemology to consider. But the situation altogether alters when we seem to, but do not really, know outer objects, and what happens is that our sense-experience lands us in error, instead of providing us with knowledge. Such a situation indeed proves 'perplexing' to us, and brings us face to face with a problem. But since the perplexity arises in so far as we do not know, and not in so far as we do know, the problem arising out of it should naturally be what error is, or how it is possible, not how knowledge is possible. There has, of course, been no dearth of philosophers to realize that that which is perplexing in regard to the cognitive situation is the occurrence of error and not that of knowledge. But they have seldom been so careful as to realize that the problem arising therefrom relates to error, not to knowledge as such.

The question of error can, however, arise only in connection with those things, the existence of which is to be affirmed on the basis of our knowledge of them as objects. Such things are obviously those that are outside of us. They cannot be our selves, because our selves, as previously seen, are not, nor can be, known as objects; nor is their existence affirmed on the basis of our knowledge of them as objects. Epistemology regarded as the enquiry into the question of error, therefore, concerns the external world, but not the self. With regard to the self, there arises error in so far as it is regarded as an object of knowledge, and is thereby placed on the same footing as outer objects from the epistemological point of view. This consideration, as we shall see later, is profoundly significant with regard to the possibility of metaphysics as well as to the distinction between metaphysics and science. However that may be, it remains to be observed that while epistemology thus relates to the external world, and not to the self, there is a sense in which reference to the self is essential to the very possibility

of this branch of knowledge. In regard to the external world considered as it is in itself, the question of error does not arise any more than that of knowledge. It is only in connection with its cognitive relation with the self that knowledge may take place or error may arise. Had there been the external world only and no self, there would have been no such thing as knowledge of the external world, nor would there have been any such thing as error with regard to it. This obviously means that the existence of the self is a presupposition of the possibility of error, and consequently of epistemology, which is but the enquiry into error.

In the light of the results of our discussions in the essay on 'The Problem and Postulates of a Theory of Knowledge', it needs, however, to be added that the problem of epistemology is such that it does not, strictly speaking, admit of a mere psycho-physical treatment. Nor can it be said to come within the province of logic. And this for the simple reason that no matter whether logic be held to deal with analytic truths only or with both analytic and synthetic truths, it should, in any case, be concerned with a priori truths, truths concerning relations of ideas, whereas the problem of epistemology relates to synthetic judgments, and exclusively to those which concern matters of fact. Since the epistemological problem thus falls outside the scope of the sciences like physics and psychology on the one hand, and that of logic on the other, and since there is no doubt about its genuineness, it should be considered by some branch of knowledge other than these. But if none of the sciences mentioned here can have claim to be the branch of knowledge in demand, far less can that claim be said to belong to any of the remaining sciences. This process of elimination seems to leave us with no option but to hold that the epistemological problem comes in for investigation within the field of philosophy, and that philosophy regarded as a separate branch of knowledge is genuine at least in so far as it deals with the epistemological problem concerning our erroneous experience of the external world.

III

THE METAPHYSICAL ATTITUDE

THE question remains whether there is any problem or problems other than the strictly epistemological one which philosophy could claim as peculiarly its own, and in virtue of the investigation of which it could assume a new aspect or aspects in addition to that in which it is called epistemology. In particular, the question is whether philosophy under the well-known, but much disputed, title of metaphysics is possible. In dealing with this question it is, however, necessary to bear in mind that when philosophy first entered upon its career it took the shape of an enquiry which was generally known as metaphysics, and that no question was raised about the nature, conditions and limits of our knowledge—a question which is even now regarded as epistemological. In consequence, there arose no dispute about the position of metaphysics, nor was any question raised about the possibility of this branch of knowledge. This does not, of course, mean that the enquiry which has been given the name 'metaphysics' by tradition constitutes the branch of knowledge to which this name should be given, nor that metaphysics is indisputably a genuine branch of knowledge. But it undoubtedly testifies to the existence, in the human mind, of an attitude no less natural and no less genuine than any other that has contributed to the enlightenment that is man's richest heritage.

This attitude is, however, quite distinct from the other attitudes of the human mind—moral, aesthetic and religious. It begets the belief that there is *more* in the world than what *appears* to us. About the legitimacy, genuineness and even fruitfulness of this belief there can hardly be any doubt. In a sense, this belief is the mainspring of the adventures of science in the understanding of the world. The world as it *appears* to us is a mass of more or less unconnected fragments. But to science it is 'more', being a well-ordered system of parts, the ordering of which is due to the laws of Nature.

Now, if the order and system of the world were the sole constituent

of the 'more' in the world than what appears to us, the belief in question would obviously be unable to lead us beyond the province of science. To this consideration may be added another, viz., that our moral, aesthetic and religious attitudes can hardly yield any information about the world outside of us, much less tell us anything about the 'more' in the world than what appears to us. Thus the ground would be cut from under the feet of metaphysics, if by metaphysics be meant an enquiry separate from that which is called science. Hence the justification for the overthrow of metaphysics by David Hume and his disciples of the present day, the logical positivists.

But then, the metaphysicians, a strange brotherhood whose members are more often than not made adept in bad logic by tradition and training, have generally turned the belief in question to account in a curious manner, viz., by drawing a distinction between the *real* and the *apparent*, and by holding that that which is 'more' in the world than what appears to us is the real or reals. And thus have they made out their case in terms of the view that metaphysics is the enquiry into Reality, while science as well as common sense are confined within the bounds of Appearance—a view which, it is needless to mention, has generally been upheld by them with vigour and zeal and which has rarely been superseded by any other of its kind.

It is, of course, true that the plain man's interest generally lies in what appears to him. If he contemplates the 'more' in the world than what appears to him, he generally does that under the urge of hopes and fears, and rarely out of a genuine spirit of enquiry, so that the 'more' in the world is, in his case, imaginary rather than real. But what about that which appears to him? It is obviously not imaginary. Is it, then, not real? The answer that comes from traditional metaphysics is both a 'yes' and a 'no'. The view has often been held that that which appears is distinct from what it appears to be, and that the latter called *appearance* comes within the comprehension of the plain man, whereas the former called *reality* eludes his grasp. As against this view it would, however, be enough to point out that it is vitiated by the admission of a false abstraction. If that which appears be distinct from what it appears to be, the proposition 'this thing or that thing appears' would obviously be meaningless. The consideration of false or illusory appearances, be it added, does not warrant the admission of the distinction between appearance and

reality, but only demands the recognition of the non-existent or the indeterminate in distinction from the existent or the determinate. Thus on the level of common sense there arises no question of the so-called reality regarded as distinct from the so-called appearance, with the result that no case is made out for the possibility of metaphysics in the sense under discussion.

But the consideration of the fact that science knows about the 'more' in the world than what appears to us, it may be contended, serves to reopen the question of the possibility of metaphysics in the sense of an enquiry into Reality as distinguished from Appearance. The 'more' in the world discovered by science, it may be held, is reality in its case, while that which appears is mere appearance, so that science may be said to admit the distinction between reality and appearance, and to be devoted to the quest of reality. But, as the contention may continue, that which is reality in the case of science is, in a deeper analysis, nothing but appearance, so that the quest of reality may be said to remain unfulfilled in the domain of science. Where, then, can this quest, the legitimacy of which is testified to by science, be fulfilled except in a separate branch of knowledge which, for want of a better title to bear, may be entitled 'metaphysics'? Thus on the level of science a case seems to be made out for the possibility of metaphysics in the sense of the enquiry into Reality.

In examining the above position we should, however, admit that what is 'more' in the world in the case of science, viz., the order and system in it or the laws of Nature to which its order and system are due, does not appear to us, but stands in need of discovery by means of patient and laborious researches. In fact, the laws of Nature are just one of the kinds of things which never appear to us, and yet are such that we are capable of having access to them, as is evident from the very existence of science. But the question is whether the 'more' in the world in the scientific sense can be construed as reality—reality as distinguished from appearance. The reply should be in the negative, for the obvious reason that the laws of Nature do not exist separately from, but really belong with, the things that appear to us. In fact, they are the general ways in which things appearing to us behave. But in appearing to us things do not—and obviously also cannot—appear with their general ways of behaviour or the order and system in which they are held. This only reveals a peculiarity which differentiates that which is

general from that which is particular. In any case, it provides no reason for holding the view that the order and system of things, which do not appear to us, constitute the *reality* of things, whereas that aspect or those aspects in which they appear to us constitute their *appearance*. Strictly speaking, that which is thus called appearance is as essential to things in themselves as that which is thus called reality, so that this view is tantamount to the admission of a division within things which is unwarranted and uncalled for. This division, it is needless to add, would be rendered acuter and more pronounced if it were further held, as was done by Kant, that the appearances of things only are known, whereas their reality is unknown and unknowable.

The fact, however, is that the laws of Nature, or rather the order and system of things which are due to these laws, signify, from the point of view of our understanding of things, a certain degree of the intelligibility of things which is higher than that which is manifest in their usual appearance to us. If a thing is more intelligible in one of its aspects and less intelligible in another, what this means is that it has two aspects differing in the degree of intelligibility, and not that in the former aspect it is one thing, viz., reality, and, in the latter, quite a different thing, viz., appearance. This position is fully borne out by the fact that things as interpreted by science are not distinct from, but the same as, what they appear to be, and that their scientific interpretation only produces an understanding of their nature, which is more comprehensive than that which is provided by their mere appearance to us.

We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that science, strictly speaking, can recognize no distinction between reality and appearance, nor can it be said to be concerned with the search after reality—reality viewed in the context of the time-honoured distinction between reality and appearance. If a scientist admits this distinction, and professes to be devoted to the quest of reality as distinguished from appearance, he only proves unfaithful to his own calling and allows himself to fall an easy victim to a superstition which has been kept alive through the centuries under the aegis of metaphysical speculation. Thus on the level of science, as on that of common sense, there arises no question of reality as distinguished from appearance, which metaphysics in the sense of the enquiry into reality could be said to deal with.

Now, no one can deny the legitimacy of the demand for a more

comprehensive understanding of the world than that which is provided by common sense. Nor can anyone deny that science, in a manner, fulfils this demand. But even then, it may be asked whether a more comprehensive understanding of the world than that which is provided by science is possible. And to ask this question is obviously to reopen the question of the possibility of metaphysics, and to make a demand for the enquiry as to whether metaphysics can provide the most comprehensive understanding of the world and thereby lay bare the reality of things as distinguished from their appearances regarded as the sole concern of science as well as of common sense. But this is an old issue which we had occasion to discuss at some length in our essay on 'Our Knowledge of the External World'. And the conclusion which the discussion forced upon us was that metaphysics regarded as a separate branch of knowledge has no means of interpreting the world, not to speak of its being able to provide the most comprehensive view of the world.

We have so far been in the company of the enemies of metaphysics. But hostility to metaphysics is not our *forte*. Metaphysics was perhaps the earliest attempt of man to conquer Nature in the manner of making her reveal her secrets. But as time passed it became increasingly clear that neither its attitude nor its method is suited to the task it had originally undertaken. In consequence, under the force of circumstances which are well known to every student of European thought, science came into existence, endowed with the attitude and the method in demand, and took the place of metaphysics in the most befitting manner. The advent of science, however, created a real crisis for metaphysics. And metaphysicians were required to meet it. This they could do in either of two ways—by completely renouncing their office or by finding out a suitable problem or problems for themselves to deal with, if there were any. But they did neither. What they actually did was to cling to the old problem of the understanding of the nature of the world, not knowing that whatever attempt they might make to solve this problem could succeed only in producing a pseudo-science. The metaphysicians thus threw themselves into an unnecessary and unseemly competition with the scientists. And in this they of all men were perhaps victims of the evil force of jealousy. But even then, the cause of their moral and intellectual rehabilitation is not lost, for, as we shall see below, it is not impossible to show that metaphysics is, in a

sense, a genuine branch of knowledge, separate from, and yet with no rivalry against, science. To this end it is, however, necessary to turn back to the attitude of the human mind which, as mentioned before, calls forth the belief that there is 'more' in the world than what appears to us.

IV

TRANSCENDENTAL DISCOVERY OF SELF AS SUBJECT

NOW, in order to ascertain what the 'more' in question is, it is necessary, as a first step, to ascertain precisely what *appears* to us, for otherwise things having the sense of the 'more' may be taken to be things appearing to us, and vice versa. Such confusions are not uncommon in the field of philosophy, and perhaps also in that of science. Nothing, however, can be said to appear to me except in so far as it is an *object* of my knowledge; and the peculiarity of my knowledge in this context is that it is not possible except in so far as something presents itself to me as an *other* or a not-self. This plainly means that that which appears to me is an object of my *outer* knowledge, that is, a thing characterizable as outer or external. If the truth of this proposition be doubted, and, in particular, it be argued that that which appears to me need not necessarily be an outer object, but may as well be my self and, consequently, that the knowledge involved in a thing's appearing to me need not necessarily be outer, but may be inner as well, even then we can hold our ground in view of one of our previous findings, which consists in stating that my knowledge of my self as an object is an absurdity. So we are entitled to the conclusion that that which appears to us must be an object of our outer knowledge which obviously is an external object such as a table, a chair, etc., and that self-knowledge in the sense of our knowledge of our self as an object being an absurdity, our self cannot be said to *appear* to us.

What can, then, be the 'more' in the world than what appears to us? Now, in any attempt to answer this question it should be borne in mind that that which is 'more' does not, and also cannot, appear to us; and yet it should be *related* to something that appears or to the behaviour of a thing appearing or else should be something that is necessarily implied by a thing's appearing to us. That which does not conform to

any of these requirements is obviously such that we can have no means of communication with it, with the result that even supposing that it is there, it would, for us, be as good as non-existent.

Now, the laws of Nature or the order and system of the world that are due to these laws, as previously observed, neither do nor can *appear* to us. And they are *related* most intimately to the things appearing to us, being the general ways of their behaviour. They are not only suggested by the behaviour of things appearing to us, but are meaningless except in so far as they are verified with reference to the latter. But, precisely on this account, the order and system of the world due to the laws of Nature, while being 'more' in the world than what appears to us, come in for investigation within the province of science, leaving hardly any scope for any other branch of knowledge to make enquiries into them. This goes to show why metaphysics regarded as a branch of knowledge separate from science cannot be an appropriate means of the investigation of the order and system of the world. In any case, the order and system which metaphysics may make bold to ascribe to the world should naturally be such that their empirical verification is at least not feasible, so that they cannot be shown to bear the guarantee of being true of the world and hence are as good as useless.

However that may be, were the order and system of the world the only thing coming under the head: the 'more' in the world than what appears to us, metaphysics would obviously be an impossibility. But, as we shall immediately see, this cannot be the case. Of course, in the investigation of the 'more' in the world, what appears to us, and especially how that which appears to us behaves, should be taken into consideration. But it cannot be denied that a thing's appearing to us obviously involves the event that happens to that thing, viz., its appearing as such. No doubt there is no necessity about anything's appearing to us. But in case anything actually does appear to us, it cannot but bear the event of appearing so long as it continues to appear. Now, the event of a thing's appearing is peculiar in that it points beyond that thing and in a direction in which neither that thing itself nor its behaviour can point. Unfortunately, however, philosophers, and even scientists, have often lost sight of this consideration and failed to look beyond the mere fact of the inseparability of the thing as appearing and the event of its appearing. And, in consequence, they have been led to the mistaken view that the thing as appearing is an

appearance, a view which, among other things, is instrumental to the loss of the cause of metaphysics. But the fact remains that just as the consideration of things appearing to us, and especially of their behaviour, as we have already observed, makes for science, so the consideration of the event of the appearing of what appears to us may open up a vista to the goal of metaphysics. It is on this point that we have now to dwell.

Nothing can be spoken of as appearing if it merely *is* but is not at the same time referred to something else, which, of course, should be such that a thing's being referred to it can mean the appearing of that thing. This consideration obviously brings out the truth that the event of appearing involves a relation, but a relation of a peculiar nature, its peculiarity consisting in that its terms are: something that appears and something else to which the former may be said to appear or, to use epistemological terminology, the object and the subject. It should, however, be borne in mind that it is not necessary for a thing to *appear* or even to *be*. Its appearing as well as its being are only matters of fact so that we may, without involving ourselves in logical absurdity, deny its appearing as well as its being even when it appears to us. But once the event of appearing is admitted, the subject is to be admitted at the same time, not as a mere matter of fact but as a matter of logical necessity. Thus there is a fundamental difference between the manner of the admission of the subject and that of the admission of the object, the former being logical or a priori (of course, in the Kantian sense) and the latter factual or empirical. This difference should naturally be an indication of the difference in nature and status between the subject and the object. That they should differ in these respects, which is thus brought to light through the analysis of the event of appearing, is precisely what is meant by our previous finding that that which is subject cannot itself be an object, and, conversely, that that which is an object cannot itself be the subject.

How precisely the subject and the object must differ in nature and status is, however, the outstanding question. That the subject is *more* than what appears is, of course, to be admitted. But, in view of the difference between the manners in which the event of appearing respectively points to them—it may be argued—they should be held to fall apart from each other so as not to belong to the same world. In other words, the subject is more *than* what appears, but not more *in*

the world where that which appears belongs. It seems that an argument like this weighed with Kant in his attempt to determine the nature and status of the subject. While realizing the truth that the subject is logically presupposed by the event of the appearing of things, Kant found himself unable to regard the subject as an *existence* and a part of the world to which the object belongs, and arrived at the view that it is of a purely logical character.

We should not, however, mind a layman's holding the view that the world consists of those things alone that can appear or present themselves in an empirical manner, viz., as *objects* of our experience, because he cannot after all be expected to apply himself to the analysis of the event of appearing, far less to be conversant with the implications of this event. We may also excuse a philosopher holding this view, if he, like the layman, is incapable of analysing this event or analyses it inadequately so as to miss its implication relating to the subject. But Kant, whose unusually successful analysis of this event led him to realize the necessity of the admission of the subject as something 'more' than what appears, cannot be excused for his excluding the subject from the world of existence. What is directly responsible for his taking this wrong step is, however, his confusion of the peculiarity of our way of admitting the subject with the peculiarity of the nature and status of the subject itself. And this confusion is the outcome of his failure to realize a truth which may be stated as follows.

Whatever comes to be admitted as an implication of the event of appearing must be of the nature of *existence*, and there seems to be no reason why it should not be so. But there are two ways, not one, of such an admission. One relates to that which appears or is the object of experience, and the other to that which is subject. If anyone holds that the former concerns *existence*, but the latter has nothing whatsoever to do with it, he does that obviously on the assumption that the sole criterion of the validity of a judgment relating to existence is empirical verification, which means that nothing can be said to exist which is incapable of appearing or is not an actual or possible object of experience. But this assumption, we may make bold to declare, betrays a prejudice which is at best a destructive weapon in the hands of a section of philosophers who have earned reputation as faithful adherents of empiricism, but whose real achievement consists in mutilating this philosophical standpoint. Since the event of appearing points

to the subject with no less certainty than it does to the object, to find in this event evidence of existence of nothing else than the object is indeed tantamount to the advocacy of a mutilated form of empiricism. That which cannot be affirmed to be an existence from the empirical standpoint, and for whose existence there can, consequently, be no evidence at all is that which is *transcendent*, but not the subject which, as Kant was right in holding, is not transcendent, but *transcendental*, that is, related to the event of appearing as its logical presupposition, while being incapable of appearing or being an object of actual or possible experience.

The above consideration indicates that the criterion of validity is not empirical verifiability in all cases of judgment relating to existence, but that, in the case of the judgment relating to the existence of that which appears or is object, it is empirical verifiability, whereas, in that of the judgment relating to the existence of that which is subject, it is different, and consists in the subject's being logically presupposed by the event of the appearing of the object. Kant, who realized the truth which the so-called empiricists could not do, viz., that the subject is 'more' than what appears, ought to have admitted both the criteria of the validity of judgments relating to existence, and to have thereupon held that that which is subject is as much an existence as that which is an object, and that the former is 'more' *in* the world where the latter belongs. Why, then, he did not do so cannot, however, be explained except on the supposition that he could not overcome the influence of the prejudice which vitiated the empirical standpoint of his great predecessor, David Hume, and which this outstanding philosopher of modern times bequeathed to subsequent generations of philosophers.

If doubt be still left about the necessity of holding that the subject regarded as something 'more' than what appears is an existence, and if it be still insisted, as was done by Kant, that the subject thus regarded is of a purely logical character, we have only to advance the following argument. The event of appearing, as previously observed, is of a relational character. And the relation in question is obviously one that *happens* to both the terms: that which is the subject and that which is the object. In other words, it is purely *temporal*, not logical at all. That being so, both of its terms should be of the nature of *existence*, because no relation is purely temporal or can be said to happen on either side except in so far as both of its terms are of the nature of existence and

neither is of a different nature, say, of a logical character. Thus that which is subject, like that which is object, must be an existence, and not, as Kant held, a logical entity.

In the light of the above argument it seems, however, that Kant was really precluded from understanding the subject in the sense in which he found it necessary to do, viz., as that to which things may be said to appear, and that his admission of the subject as something *more* than what appears is really of no use. Strictly speaking, his position, despite this admission on his part, is indistinguishable from that of Hume, who did not have this admission to his credit. In view of his conception of the subject as of a logical character, Kant's meaning of the event of appearing should, like that of Hume, be expressed in the statement: 'something appears', instead of in the statement: 'something appears to something else', which really expresses the meaning of this event, and in which Kant wished to express his own meaning of it. All this, however, goes to show that Kant missed a truth which is no other than this, that whereas that which appears strikes us as an existence on account of the fact of its appearing, that to which things appear equally strikes us as of the same nature, but does so on a different account, viz., on account of its being logically presupposed by the event of the appearing of things. This brings out the arbitrariness and untenability of the view which holds that nothing can be affirmed to be an existence which does not appear nor is an object of experience. And it provides the corrective in terms of the view that that also must be said to be an existence which does not appear nor is an object of experience, but renders the appearing of things possible by figuring as a witness to them.

We have, therefore, no option but to conclude that there is something 'more' in the world than what appears, and that it is that to which things appear, or, briefly, the subject. It should, however, be borne in mind that had things only existed and never appeared, the existence of this *something more* could never have been affirmed. For its existence comes to be affirmed only in so far as it figures as subject, which it can do only on condition that something or other appears to it. In fact, cognitional experience is exclusively fitted to be the means of the affirmation of the existence of that which is subject, because, strictly speaking, this kind of experience alone is the way of the appearing of things. This, of course, sounds strange in view of our previous con-

clusion that the non-cognitional experiences—moral, aesthetic and religious—are predominantly inward, having reference to the self rather than to outer objects. But the difficulty which thus arises would disappear if it were once realized that it is one thing for an experience to bring out the necessity of the admission of the existence of that which is subject and quite a different thing for it to convey information about *what* that is which is already found to exist as subject. Cognitional experience alone enables us to affirm the existence of that which is subject, but it is unable to tell us anything about its nature. The non-cognitional experiences, on the other hand, can only throw light on the nature of that which is subject, but they are dependent upon cognitional experience for the information that there exists something which is never an object but is that to which things present themselves as objects.

Now is the time for a brief consideration of two questions which are of special importance in connection with the enquiry in which we are just engaged. They are: (i) Is there anything else than that which is subject, which can be regarded as an existence and also as a thing coming under the head: 'more' in the world than what appears? (ii) Is that which is subject one or many? As regards the first question, it obviously precludes the consideration of those things that do or can appear, and are, on that account, taken to be *existences*. Equally irrelevant to this question is the consideration of the laws of Nature or the order and system of the world that are due to them, because they, while being more in the world than what appears, must belong to, and not be separate from, the things that appear. All that we are in the present context required to do is, therefore, to consider the event of the appearing of things and thereby to ascertain whether this event points to the existence of anything other than the subject, which, like the latter, is characterizable as something *more* than what appears. To this end it is, however, necessary to find out whether anything other than the subject is logically presupposed by the event in question. And on this point we may only venture to state that the analysis of the event of the appearing of things, if it is strict and unaffected by extra-logical considerations, can point to nothing *more* than that which appears except that which figures as subject. Our answer to the question under consideration is, therefore, simply in the negative.

In dealing with the second question, we should, of course, bear in mind that that which is subject must be as much a unitary being as that

which is object. But then, the former has a peculiarity which is all its own and is out of the question in the case of the latter. This peculiarity of that which is subject relates to an undeniable fact, the fact of the sharing of experience and inter-subjective communication. The subject is not isolated in its experience, but shares it with other subjects. This obviously implies that that which is subject is only one among many of its kind. That this is so cannot be denied except by having recourse to Solipsism, and about Solipsism it is only to be pointed out that it stands negatived by the fact of the sharing of experience and inter-subjective communication. The answer to the present question is thus determined and consists in stating that that which is subject is not one but many.¹

But granted that that which is subject typifies the kind of things that are 'more' in the world than what appears, and that it is not one but many, there is no getting away from admitting that to say about a thing that it is subject is really to point out a relation which it bears to something else, viz., that which is object, without saying anything about *what* it is in itself. In fact, the word 'subject', like the words such as 'father', 'sister', etc., is relative, and signifies the relation of the thing designated by it to another thing, instead of conveying any information about the nature of the former. What is thus true about the subject may, of course, be said to be equally true about the object. But then, the fact remains that the object is that which appears, whereas that which is subject neither appears nor is capable of doing so. And this brings out the truth that cognitional experience serves the subject and the object not in the same manner but differently. In the case of the object, it not only serves to establish that it exists, but also provides information about its characteristics, whereas in the case of the subject it leads to the affirmation of its existence, which no other kind of experience can do, but is unable to throw any light on what it is in itself.

It is of interest to note that Kant, in so far as he held that the subject of experience defies characterization, made no secret of his meaning about the incompetency of cognitional experience to provide any information about the nature of that which is subject. But he at the same time found in cognitional experience no evidence for the *existence* of that which is subject. Now, these two positions combined together, as they were in the case of Kant, we may be told, may make sense and

¹ *Vide infra*, pp. 242-3; also pp. 257-8.

find philosophical justification. But how can the former position, it may be asked, be maintained without the acceptance of the latter at the same time? The existence and the nature, the *that* and the *what*, of a thing, it would naturally be pointed out, are inseparable so that the existence of a thing, it would be argued, cannot be affirmed in the absence of knowledge about its nature. If its nature be inaccessible on any ground, its existence should necessarily be so on the same ground.

The difficulty, if there be any, in the present context should, however, be more serious than what it is thus stated to be, and is one to which it is Kant who lays himself open. The *that* and the *what* of a thing being inseparable, in the absence of information about the latter, not only the former cannot be admitted, but the thing cannot be spoken of at all, far less can it be taken, as was done by Kant, to be the logical presupposition of something else. From this point of view, Kant is precluded from admitting the subject as the logical presupposition of the event of the appearing of things, and his understanding of this event should have been the same as that of Hume, viz., that 'things appear', and not that 'things appear to something else'. But if anyone finds it necessary to hold, as he, like Kant, should do, that this event has the latter meaning, then he cannot, for the reason we have previously explained, do without admitting that that 'something else' is an existence. Of course, a thing is not a mere *that* any more than it is a mere *what*. In fact, it is both in one. But this is true of the thing considered as it is in itself, and may not be to the point in connection with our *discovery* of it. A thing discovered is a thing in itself which is, of course, both a *that* and a *what*. But why cannot it be that the attempt at its discovery brings out initially, though not finally, its mere *that* without its *what*? This is precisely what is bound to happen when the thing to be discovered is that which is incapable of appearing, viz., that which is the subject. The drawback of the attempt at the discovery of that which is the subject, which is thus evident, is, however, due to the fact that this attempt can start from nowhere else than cognitional experience which is predominantly outward.

Real difficulty would, however, arise if it were held that that which is subject is ultimately a bare *existence*, a mere *that* without a *what*, or that it is a thing whose existence can be affirmed, but whose nature is indeterminable or, let us say, unknown and unknowable. The former view is *directly* tantamount to declaring the subject to be a mere non-

entity, a sheer non-existence, because that which is said to exist without being somewhat is nothing. The latter *indirectly* amounts to upholding the same position, because a thing whose nature is indeterminate and indeterminable is obviously one whose existence is engulfed in nescience about its nature, and hence is lost beyond recovery, so that the affirmation of its existence would be only another name for the declaration of its non-existence.

So far as we are concerned, it is far from us to entertain either of the two views considered above. But then, there is no way out of the position that cognitional experience alone can put us on the way to the discovery of that which is subject, by bringing out the necessity of its admission and leading to the affirmation of its existence, and yet that it is the kind of experience which is by nature incompetent to guide us further, especially by way of providing information about the *what* of that which is subject. The position thus stated has, however, no sense of a conclusion, far less can it be said to constitute a theory. It only brings to light a situation which is undoubtedly pregnant with a problem, the problem relating to the *what* of that which is found *transcendentally* to exist as the subject of cognitional experience.

THE PROBLEM OF SELF AND METAPHYSICS

IT is the situation bearing the problem stated above that opens up the possibility of philosophy under the title of metaphysics—metaphysics regarded as a branch of knowledge separate from science. But metaphysics would be reduced to nothing or at best develop into a pseudo-science if it proceeds to the treatment of the problem without realizing its characteristic peculiarity. The problem which may now be appropriately called the ‘problem of self’ is, strictly speaking, transcendental so that it should be taken for granted once for all that the self, which in an attempt at its discovery is immediately that which is subject, cannot ultimately be anything either *transcendent* or *empirical*. But philosophers have seldom realized this truth, with the result that metaphysics, which is really ‘philosophy of self’ (in Sanskrit, Adhyātma-vidyā),¹ has in their hands developed into a pseudo-science in one manner or another.

A. The Development of the Philosophy of Self into a Pseudo-science

Plato in ancient times, and Descartes in modern times, are the typical representatives of the view of the self as a transcendent entity. In advocating this view they obviously ignored the truth that that which is transcendent is incomprehensible and so really nothing at all to us. Yet they tried to make something of the self regarded as a transcendent being. And this they did in a rather strange manner, which was perhaps the only manner left open to them, viz., by surrendering their original standpoint—by descending to the empirical level, and understanding the self, on the one hand, on the analogy of, and, on the other, in contrast with, the objects of experience, that is, outer objects. Thus,

¹ This Sanskrit term means ‘Reasoned Enquiry into Self’.

according to them, the self is as much a substance endowed with qualities, that is, a '*qualified*' entity as any outer object, but its qualities—which, on their view, are thought or immateriality, simplicity and indestructibility (or immortality)—are respectively the opposites of those that are ascribed by them to outer objects, viz., extension or materiality, complexity and destructibility. In thus conceiving the qualities of the self to be in contrast with those of physical things, they were obviously under the influence of prejudice, and especially extra-logical considerations derived from traditional religion among other sources.

However that may be, once the idea of understanding the self on the analogy of, and yet in contrast with, outer objects, which these philosophers set on foot, gained ground, the name 'philosophy of self' without its real meaning lost its hold on many discerning enquirers with a scientific bent of mind. And it was, perhaps, by accident that some of them turned that idea to account by way of ushering into existence the so-called 'science of mind' or psychology regarded as parallel to, and co-ordinate with, the sciences of Nature.

The situation thus created was obviously full of danger to the possibility of the philosophy of self properly so called or metaphysics as we should call it. And the danger was actually brought about by David Hume in so far as he dismissed the possibility of metaphysics through the admission of psychology as a substitute for it. But what is worse than what Hume had done remained to be done long after him in our day. Today psychology is different from what it was in Hume's time, so much so that to call it by this name is only to make use of a fiction in order to cherish the memory of the illegitimate offspring of the 'philosophy of self'. It is, therefore, the height of absurdity that the neo-Humians, the logical positivists, should follow the example of Hume in dealing a death-blow to metaphysics, as they have actually done. In fact, psychology being what it is today, the logical positivists do not have at their disposal even the remotest semblance of a substitute for the 'philosophy of self', so that their uncompromising denial of the possibility of metaphysics is without foundation and, in fact, the expression of a prejudice.

It is, however, of interest to note that the position of metaphysics would have remained unassailable, and there would have arisen no need of defending it, had Kant fully succeeded in arresting, as he undertook

to do, the process of the deterioration of the philosophical situation which culminated in Hume. He was on the verge of success in so far as he corrected Hume's mistake by means of his discovery of the truly transcendental character of the self. But he eventually missed his mark in his relapse to Hume's mistaken view of the self as an object of empirical knowledge and his admission, consequent thereupon, of the possibility of psychology regarded as a science standing on more or less the same footing as the natural sciences but having to deal with the self instead of anything of the nature of not-self. The attempt which Kant still made to rescue metaphysics by means of the admission of the *noumenal* self in the light of the deliverance of moral consciousness, of course, testified to the greatness of his philosophical insight. But it certainly miscarried in as much as it involved the understanding of the self in terms of the distinction between *appearance* and *reality* which should naturally be as unwarranted and uncalled for as the similar understanding of outer objects has already been found to be.

Another way in which metaphysics as 'philosophy of self' was vitiated and abused is well illustrated in the post-Kantian German philosophy which came to acquire the boastful and apparently captivating title of Absolute Idealism. For this the responsibility was, in a sense, Kant's. But it was due not so much to anything that he did as to what he left undone. As previously seen, Kant's analysis of the cognitional situation resulted in the admission of the logical subject, without leading further to the affirmation of the *existence* of that which is subject, that is, the self. And he seems to have taken no notice of the fact of the sharing of experience and inter-subjective communication, with the result that he left undecided the question whether that which is subject is one or many. On the other hand, with regard to the outside world, he advocated the doctrine of 'thing-in-itself' which consisted in holding the view that this world in itself is, for us, indeterminate and indeterminable. And although he used the term 'thing-in-itself' sometimes in the singular and sometimes in the plural, he was, from the standpoint of this doctrine, precluded from arriving at any decision as to whether there is one 'thing-in-itself' or many of its kind. Thus we have an account of the points, all of vital philosophical importance, on which Kant was left with indecision. It would, however, be unfair to blame Kant on this account. For in the true interest of any enquiry, whether philosophical or otherwise, it should be accepted as a guiding

principle that when indisputable decision on a point or points is not easily available, it is better to leave them undecided than to decide them at any cost. But it is precisely this principle that was violated by the immediate disciples of Kant.

Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, the grandiose triumvirate, who flourished in the wake of Kantian philosophy, led metaphysics out of the state of indecision in which Kant had left it, by advocating Absolutism, the doctrine which exorcises the difference in nature and status between self and Nature, and correspondingly, between the enquiry into the self and the enquiry into Nature, that is, science, by bringing both kinds of existence within the ambit of One Ultimate Reality called the Absolute. Fichte's Absolute is self expanded to the extent of infinity at the cost of the independent reality of Nature. To Schelling, the Absolute is an indefinable neutral substance in which not only the distinction between the world of Nature and the world of selves but also all differentiations within either completely disappear. Hegel's Absolute bears the promise of the maintenance of balance between Nature and self, and yet it is spiritual in character. But these differences matter little. And no worse consequence would follow if these different forms of Absolutism were replaced by the most uncompromising materialistic Absolutism. For Absolutism in no form can hold good except at a heavy cost, the cost of the fundamental philosophic truth, the discovery of which went to the credit of Kant, viz., that the self in relation to Nature is *transcendental*. From this point of view, it is necessary to add, subjective idealism, which reduces Nature to the ideas of the self, and materialism, which adopts the opposite device of bringing the self over to the side of Nature in one manner or another, are plainly unphilosophical.

The conclusions following from the foregoing discussions are as follows. The so-called 'philosophy of self' belonging to the Platonic-Cartesian tradition is a misnomer for the enquiry into the self. And Absolutism, whether idealistic, neutralistic, spiritualistic or materialistic, is neither metaphysics nor science, but brings both to ruin. Idealism and materialism, while being contradictory to each other, produce between them the same ruinous effect which Absolutism does alone. Lastly, so long as the science which till this day is known as psychology does not cease to be called by this name and is not given a new name so as to be made free of the stigma of illegitimate birth, the

prejudice against the possibility of metaphysics, which was the keynote of Hume's thought, will remain alive, with the result that philosophy will go on inventing ways of escape from the problem of self, instead of applying itself to the task of solving it.

B. Towards the Solution of the Problem of Self

The problem relating to the *what* of that which is subject or, briefly, the problem of self being, as previously observed, transcendental, its solution cannot be had anywhere either above or below the transcendental level. In particular, this problem not only cannot receive any solution but would turn out to be false if it were viewed in the empirical perspective or placed on the empirical level. This consideration is obviously dissuasive of any attempt to understand the self in terms of the category of substance, or, in other words, to conceive of it as a *qualified* entity. Equally improper would it be to view the self atomistically as an aggregate of parts, or even organically as a whole underlying, and imparting meaning to, parts. For these ways of viewing things as well as the former one seem to be inapplicable outside the empirical sphere which comprises outer objects—objects that are apt to present themselves in their *what* together with their *that*. So the basis of the solution of the problem of self is to be found in whatever consideration or considerations are available on the transcendental level where, it is needless to point out, that which is subject is all-important.

Now, one such consideration is, of course, that which relates to an implication of the fact of cognitional experience. And it consists in stating that there is a thing characterizable as subject and that that which is subject typifies an *existence* to which another kind of existence, viz., that which is object, presents itself as 'other'. Had my cognitional experience or yours or anyone else's, however, been isolated, then the present consideration would have been the only one of its kind on which the treatment of the problem of self could depend. But the situation is really different, owing to the fact of the sharing of experience and inter-subjective communication. And this points to the multiplicity of that which is subject. That there *exists* something which figures as subject in the cognitional situation and that this 'something' is not solitary but that there are many of its kind are thus the two con-

siderations, both pertaining to the transcendental sphere, which we have immediately to fall back upon in dealing with the problem of self. Of the two, the latter would obviously be meaningless except in so far as the former holds good. If that which is subject were no *existence*, all talk about its multiplicity would carry little sense. But the former apart from the latter would prove self-stultifying by resulting in Solipsism. Or, if Solipsism be avoided, as was done by Advaita Vedānta in India and Fichte in the West, by means of the egotistic enlargement of the individual self to the extent of infinity, the result would be Absolute Egoism, which is by no means preferable to Solipsism. Strictly speaking, the problem of self would be reduced to an absurdity and whatever solution might be offered to it would be not only unwarranted but tantamount to a way of escape from it, even if it were admitted that that which is subject is an existence, without realizing at the same time that it is not solitary but only one among many of its kind.

But how, it will naturally be asked, would the admission of the multiplicity of that which is subject alongside of the admission of its existence contribute to the real solution of the problem of self? This is precisely the question, the answer to which would determine the future of metaphysics regarded as 'philosophy of self'. But the true answer, it may be pointed out at once, would not be forthcoming if that which is subject be conceived of as a mere monad with no direct and immediate or rather essential relation with others of its kind. For, in the absence of such a relation, it will, with regard to the treatment of the problem of self, make no real difference whether that which is subject be held to be one or many, and in dealing with this problem we shall naturally have to proceed on the assumption that that which is subject is, as it were, solitary, even if we are somehow aware that it is only one among many of its kind. But in that case either of two consequences would follow according as the multiplicity of that which is subject is kept in view or completely ignored. In the former event, the problem of self would remain, but it would be impossible of solution, or, if a solution be offered to it, it would be a false one of the kind belonging to the Platonic-Cartesian tradition. In the latter event, it is more likely than not that this problem would disappear into the so-called metaphysical problem of Ultimate Reality demanding for its solution the admission of the Absolute. But this would obviously mean deflection from the quest of the self which is unwarranted and uncalled for.

So the solution of the problem of self which we are in search of will be out of the question except in so far as it is granted to be a fact that that which is subject in the cognitional situation is directly and immediately or rather essentially related to others of its kind. The fact of the sharing of experience and inter-subjective communication points to the multiplicity of that which is subject. Also does it speak of a relation between one subject and another. But then, the relation, strictly speaking, is not direct and immediate or essential, but indirect and mediate or, as we may say, contingent. I am said to share my experience with you in so far as there is a common objective situation between you and me, to which we both react more or less in the same manner, and we are mutually aware of this fact. Of course, nothing but experience can be a tie to bind me with you in any manner whatsoever, and the tie in this case is experience. But here the experience is mediated by an objective situation so that we are not really bound together, but, in a sense, remain aloof from each other. The question, therefore, arises whether there is any experience or consciousness in you and me which binds us together in a direct and immediate relation, or, in other words, contains the feeling of ourselves as being essential to each other.

The question raised above is of fundamental importance in 'philosophy of self', or, as we propose to call it, metaphysics. But philosophers have seldom treated of it in its true perspective. The none too rare tendency in them is to understand the consciousness in demand in terms of religious consciousness supposed to be inseparably bound up with belief in the existence of God. As regards this position, it is, however, far from us to deny any such thing as religious consciousness or to belittle the importance of the belief in the existence of God. Let anyone entertain this belief if he can thereby make himself and others about him happy. But from the strict philosophical point of view we are, as previously observed, precluded from admitting anything as an *existence* which is neither an object of, nor is transcendently implied by, our cognitional experience. Since God, as will be admitted on all hands, does not come under either of these two heads, His existence, despite whatever importance its recognition may be said to have in the conduct of human affairs, seems to be out of the question within the domain of philosophy in its strict sense.

Granted, however, that religious consciousness is that consciousness the essence of which consists in belief in the existence of God, it

cannot, in this sense, be the consciousness we are in search of, viz., that which yields the feeling of ourselves as being essential to one another. The reason is that in so far as God is believed to be *immanent*, religious consciousness, far from revealing any relation whatsoever between you and me, seems to be incompatible with the recognition of yourself and myself as strictly real. And in so far as He is believed to be *transcendent*, this consciousness, of course, speaks of a relation between you and me, but obviously one that is mediated by God and so lacks directness and immediacy or essentiality. Thus an immanent God demands of His creatures the highest sacrifice, the sacrifice of their independent reality, and a transcendent God establishes His own glory by drawing each of them separately to Himself, and thereby leaves them in isolation from one another. This shows that religious consciousness in its usual sense provides at best a way of escape from the problem of self instead of holding out any prospect of its solution.

But should we not seek, as at first sight it seems the most appropriate thing to do, the help of social psychology in ascertaining that mode or those modes of our consciousness which produce in us the feeling of ourselves as being essential to one another? Of course, this branch of knowledge, as its very title indicates, provides information about those modes of our consciousness which liberate us from our usual state of relative isolation and make us feel a kind of relation holding ourselves together. But it is extremely doubtful whether any of the modes of consciousness which social psychology brings to light yields the feeling in question. I cannot feel myself as being essential to another person except in so far as we stand in such a relation as is subject to no condition. But it seems that none of the modes of the so-called social consciousness fulfils this requirement, because they are determined by group, community, race or nationality as the case may be. And this indicates that the question of the mode of consciousness we are in search of does not come within the province of social psychology, but needs to be dealt with by philosophy, unless, of course, it be the case that philosophers are unwilling to shoulder their own responsibility and are prepared for meek submission to the authority of science.

Now, the question is whether the process of elimination, which we have been pursuing in our search of the mode or modes of consciousness capable of yielding the feeling of ourselves as being essential to

one another, could be extended to our moral and aesthetic consciousness, especially the former. If the answer should be in the affirmative, then the search would in all probability end in a negative result, and consequently the problem of self would turn out to be insoluble or even false, and metaphysics regarded as an attempt to solve this problem would prove impossible or even absurd. But in view of the results of our previous investigation of moral consciousness, such a predication seems to be out of the question.

As we have already found, moral consciousness and also aesthetic consciousness, while having an aspect in which they are fit objects of scientific investigation, have another aspect altogether different from it, in which they are each a sense of value. Now, *value* as distinguished from *fact* is peculiar in that it is nothing apart from human beings—human beings as endowed with the sense of value. A world devoid of such human beings would be a world where value is out of the question. Yet value, strictly speaking, is not subjective but objective, because it is not peculiar to any individual human being or beings or any particular group or groups of human beings, but is common to mankind in general. Further, value is ultimate and a priori or transcendental in as much as it is not derivable from any supposed transcendent reality nor reducible to any empirical fact. Another characteristic which differentiates it from fact is that it is not a mere object of contemplation but is possessed of the *right* to realization through the intermediary of human beings, which, however, implies the corresponding *obligation* on the part of man to realize values. A value thus understood maybe called a worthy 'ideal'—an ideal standing in need of being realized through human agency. To admit such a thing as value and yet not to recognize this aspect of it would really amount to treating the concept of value as meaningless. For this difficulty there seems to be no remedy except the false one which consists in understanding value in terms of some fact or other. But no matter whether the concept of value be regarded as meaningless or taken to mean only an empirical fact, the consequence in either case would be the impossibility of the understanding of man in distinction from animals and, in particular, of the determination of the nature of self. But if it be a fact, and there seems to be no doubt that it is, that values are nothing apart from human beings as endowed with the sense of value, it is equally a fact that no human being can, strictly, be so called except in so far as

he contemplates the values and feels himself as under the obligation to realize them.

The above are some of the primary considerations which, as we shall see later, make for the solution of the problem of self and thereby serve to establish the possibility of metaphysics regarded as philosophy of self. But those considerations, it is necessary in the meanwhile to indicate, point to the necessity of a twofold enquiry—theoretical, on one side, and applied, on the other—which, by its very nature, falls outside the scope of any of the sciences dealing with matters of fact, and unavoidably comes within the province of philosophy. And thus is brought to light a new aspect of philosophy besides two others in which philosophy is respectively Epistemology and Metaphysics.

VI

PHILOSOPHY AS AXIOLOGY— THEORETICAL AND APPLIED

THE above-mentioned enquiry, in its theoretical aspect, is primarily concerned with the understanding of the meaning of value as such and may appropriately be called value-theory or Theoretical Axiology. This branch of knowledge is based on the idea that value is not, as some of the logical positivists would say, bad grammar or a piece of absurd phrasing, but has a reasonable meaning, in view of the fact that the word 'ought', when used, say, in ethical obligation or aesthetic worth or logical inference, is not mere nonsense, but is positively significant. While, on the one hand, Axiology is thus opposed to the logical positivist's attitude towards value; on the other, it disapproves of any attempt to reduce value to *existence*, whether in the human mind or elsewhere. Of course, there is no gainsaying the fact that the process of valuation is a mental experience, say, the feeling of approval or disapproval, and also that the goods that men desire are either actual existents or conceived to be possible existents. But it is also to be admitted that the process of valuation, while involving an element of feeling or emotion or desire, is not reducible to it, but unavoidably refers to a content, or, to use the terminology of Meinong, a 'desiderative', and that we should conceive of a 'good' or the 'good' as something more than an actual or possible existence in order that we may not have to omit that which is essential to moral value in particular, viz., moral obligation. Hence one of the fundamental theses of Axiology which consists in stating that value, though it is not anything beyond existence, yet is something more than mere existence. Value thus regarded, it is necessary to realize, is objective or common to mankind in general, so that the axiological controversy between relativism and absolutism should be decided in favour of the latter standpoint.

Applied Axiology, the other aspect of the enquiry under consideration, may be defined as a reflective search for the 'goods' or a critical enquiry into all that is worth having or worth doing. Obviously, therefore, the aim of this branch of knowledge is to determine how and how far life is worth living and to discriminate between genuinely good life and life that is not so. Applied Axiology thus understood, however, seems to be different from Ethics in its traditional sense and in the sense in which most moralists understand it, which is primarily concerned with right and wrong, virtue and sin. But there is no denying the fact that the rightness and wrongness of conduct cannot be ascertained without reference to moral value or 'goodness', which obviously means that the enquiry into right and wrong, virtue and sin is logically subordinate to Axiology, the enquiry into ultimate values including moral value. So it is plain that Ethics is no more separate from Applied Axiology than the latter is from the former, and that it is a part of the more general enquiry called Applied Axiology, and as such stands upon value-theory as its foundation.

It is, however, curious that the dependence of Ethics upon Axiology has seldom received due recognition in the treatment of the question of the rightness and wrongness of conduct even by those moralists who are axiologically-minded. Thus Moore, while as an axiologist he holds that 'good' is a simple indefinable quality, seems to make a departure from his axiological position in his treatment of the question of the rightness and wrongness of conduct in so far as he regards good results as the proper standard for ascertaining right conduct and thereby advocates a species of utilitarianism. Of course, his utilitarianism is not hedonistic in so far as he denies that pleasure alone is good in itself, and holds, on the contrary, that there are intrinsic goods other than pleasure. But there is no getting away from the fact that an action which produces benefit or good results is undoubtedly *advantageous* but is not necessarily one that *ought* to be done. It may sometimes be a plain duty to perform an action which, far from producing the best possible results, may actually be disadvantageous. In any case, moral obligations can hardly be said to owe the whole of their obligatory character to the promise of benefit or good results. Moreover, to ask, as it would be most pertinent to do, how the goodness of good results is to be judged, is enough to show that utilitarianism, far from solving the problem of rightness and wrongness of conduct, puts it a step

further back. So it is evident that utilitarianism, even in its non-hedonistic form, ignores the very thing which is, in an ultimate analysis, moral, viz., moral obligation, and that no moral theory is worth the name, which is not based on the idea that moral obligation alone is authentically moral.

VII

VALUE AND THE PROBLEM OF SELF

THE main idea underlying the above discussions, which, as we believe, constitutes the first and the foremost step towards the solution of the problem of self, is that value and its correlate, obligation, although they do not mark out a realm separate from that of matter-of-fact existence, are not mere matters of fact, but are essentially of a transcendental character. Values, as previously observed, are, of course, out of the question in a world devoid of human beings as endowed with the sense of value. But the sense of value and the feeling of obligation belong to man not in the aspect in which he is merely a part of Nature, but in that in which he is *self*, which is precisely what is meant by the transcendental character of value. And it is in the light of this proposition that the nature of self is to be ascertained. But, as we shall immediately see, it would be most improper and extremely arbitrary to jump herefrom, although one may naturally feel inclined to do, to the view that the self is an *entity* having the sense of value or the feeling of obligation for its essential quality, or, else that it is a bearer of values.

The former view is vitiated by no less a mistake than the understanding of the self on the analogy of, and yet in contrast with, outer objects. It is precisely by means of such a mistaken understanding of the self that Kant, through his analysis of moral consciousness, came to conceive of the self as *free* in contrast with outer objects regarded as determined by the principle of causality. In this he, however, lost sight of his earlier discovery that the self is transcendental and, so, unique, and also failed to realize that moral consciousness can make no departure from the recognition of the uniqueness of the self, nor, consequently, can it permit the understanding of the self on the analogy of, and yet in contrast with, outer objects. Kant, however, carried his mistaken view of the self further by ascribing to it immor-

further back. So it is evident that utilitarianism, even in its non-hedonistic form, ignores the very thing which is, in an ultimate analysis, moral, viz., moral obligation, and that no moral theory is worth the name, which is not based on the idea that moral obligation alone is authentically moral.

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tality in addition to freedom. But here his position depended not on the consideration of that which alone is genuinely and indisputably moral, viz., moral obligation, but on that of happiness, which, according to him, is foreign to moral obligation. Once Kant's interest thus went beyond moral obligation and covered fresh field, his metaphysical position alleged to be based on strictly ethical considerations did not remain confined to the understanding of the self, but assumed the complete traditional form by culminating in the belief in the existence of God.

In building up his metaphysical position in the manner indicated above, Kant, indeed, started at the right point, viz., moral obligation, but proceeded uncritically with his mind directed towards traditional beliefs in *freedom*, *immortality* and *God*. In consequence, there happened a disaster which Kant never turned back to see, viz., that each succeeding result of his investigation of the ethical situation adversely affected the preceding one, and especially that the final result jeopardized all the preceding ones, nay, the very foundation on which his entire metaphysical edifice rested, viz., the concept of moral obligation. The existence of God being granted, immortality and freedom, instead of remaining, as Kant certainly intended them to do, settled facts, would, as theological discussions make it abundantly clear, turn out to be subjects of endless controversy. And moral obligation could not be treated, as Kant wanted to treat it, as an unassailable ultimate datum, but would be unsettled by the doctrine of Divine Grace¹ which easily permits the relaxation of the strictness of moral life to the extent of perpetual moral holiday. Even supposing that Kant's metaphysical position did not include belief in God, but ended in the admission of immortality, his difficulty still would be that the latter would well warrant indefinite postponement of the discharge of moral obligation, and would thereby prove no less detrimental to moral life than the former.

In the end, we are required to enquire whether freedom, as Kant believes, is essential to, and necessarily implied by, moral obligation. In deciding this issue we have to depend on the consideration that *freedom* is relative to *necessity*, and that its meaning is to be understood

¹ This doctrine, though not a necessary corollary of belief in the existence of God, is based on the idea of self-surrender, which is often taken to be an essential aspect of religious consciousness.

in contrast with that of the latter. But necessity, being true of, and ascribable to, the objects of our experience, must be empirical, so that freedom, being relative to necessity, should be likewise empirical. The fact also seems to be that freedom relates to man's empirical life, say, as a member of society in general or of the State in particular. Of course, the ascription of freedom to man as a social creature or a citizen *presupposes* the idea that he is not a mere thing, but a self gifted with the sense of value. But that does not disprove that freedom is empirical; it only goes to show that moral value and its correlate, moral obligation, are non-empirical or rather transcendental. Strictly speaking, the self as distinguished from human personality is above the conflict between freedom and necessity, and is placed on the transcendental level where it is merely under obligation to realize the values. So it seems that in viewing the self as free, Kant really viewed it in the empirical perspective, which he ought to have avoided, and also wanted to do, in dealing with the problem of self on the basis of the consideration of moral obligation. It should, however, be observed further that freedom is no positive characteristic of the self, and that its meaning about the self is predominantly negative. It tells us that the self *is not* of the nature of outer objects which are mechanically determined. Thus it conveys information, of course indirectly, about the nature of outer things, but hardly any about the nature of the self. This, however, brings to light the mistake that has been committed by many philosophers including Kant—the mistake consisting in understanding the self on the analogy of, and yet in contrast with, outer things.

The view of the self as a bearer of values, which remains to be considered, is open to a twofold difficulty. On the one hand, it obviously amounts to conceiving of the self as an entity—though as one differing in kind from physical entities or outer objects—and hence commits the mistake mentioned above. On the other hand, it involves a gross misunderstanding of the nature of value. A value, as previously observed, is not a matter-of-fact existence, but a worthy ideal, which it obviously cannot be if it is *borne* and specially so done by an *existence*, viz., the self. Besides, if values must be borne, not only should the bearer be a self, but the self in question should be regarded as *infinite*, not finite, in order that values may not come to be condemned as subjective and relative. And this means that the final solution of the problem of value is to be found in belief in the existence of God. In consequence,

there would arise the same difficulty about moral obligation to which Kant has already been found to have exposed himself.

The ground is now prepared for the solution of the problem of self. Some of the results of our previous enquiry into this problem are positive, conveying information about the way in which its solution is to be found. Of them, the most fundamental is that the understanding of the nature of the self must be based on the consideration of values and obligations. What is meant is not that it serves immediately to determine the *what* of the self, but that it indicates that in respect of its *what* the self is transcendental, as it is undoubtedly so in respect of its *that*. Allied with this positive result of our enquiry into the problem of self are the negative ones, which may be summarized as follows.

Value, while not being a meaningless word, cannot be said to mean anything of the nature of *existence*, whether outside the human mind or even within it, notwithstanding the fact that the *process* of valuation is a mental experience called feeling or emotion or desire. Nor should value be traced back to the supposed transcendent being, viz., Infinite Mind or God in order that man's obligation, whether moral or otherwise, may not lapse by default. The fact is that value is not a *thing* to be borne by, or a quality to be ascribed to, the self, whether finite or infinite. Conceived in either way, it ceases to be a worthy ideal, which it really is. To regard the sense of value or the feeling of obligation, instead of value itself, as the peculiar quality of the self is, however, nothing but a subterfuge. Since the feeling of obligation cannot thus be a quality, nothing but prejudice can lead to the discovery in this feeling of the *necessary* presence of *freedom* and, further, to the recognition of freedom as the essential quality of the self. In fact, freedom, as previously seen, conveys positive information, though indirectly, about outer objects, but no such information about the self. What is thus true about freedom is equally true about immortality. But the case of immortality is worse than that of freedom in view of the fact that its importance in the ethical context is more doubtful than that of freedom. Hence it is plain that to ascribe freedom and immortality to the self on the alleged ethical ground is really to lose sight of the true meaning of moral value and moral obligation and of their bearing upon the nature of self. But the highest limit of the misunderstanding of their meaning is reached when they are considered as pointing not only to the self but also beyond it, and are taken to be a means of vindicating belief in God.

The net negative result of our investigation of the problem of self, then, is that the consideration of values and obligations, which is the basis of the solution of this problem and consequently the foundation of the philosophy of self, is incompatible with either of the two steps which philosophers have usually taken: (i) the understanding of the self on the analogy of, and yet in contrast with, outer objects, viz., as an *entity* endowed with *qualities* opposite to those of outer objects; (ii) the transcendence from the finite self to the Infinite Self. The first step, while obviously being vitiated by dualism of self and outer objects, mind and matter, involves the erroneous understanding of philosophy of self after the pattern of *science*. The second depends mainly upon extra-logical considerations and thereby renders philosophy of self ancillary to religion. Thus, either is a way of escape from the problem of self and from metaphysics which is primarily concerned with the solution of this problem. That being so, the duty of the metaphysician would be to rescue his enquiry from the undue influence of science on the one hand and of religion on the other. The fulfilment of this end, it is needless to emphasize, is necessary for the successful solution of the problem of self.

Religion, especially in the modern age in which it is generally at a discount, is not, however, so much a handicap to the metaphysician in his independent enquiry into the problem of self. But the case of science is different. Regarded as the embodiment of the natural tendency of man to view everything as of the nature of outer objects, and to seek for proof of the *existence* of things in empirical verification, science exercises an influence too strong and too subtle to be easily overcome even by the metaphysician. But so far as we are concerned, in our treatment of the problem of self we have, with considerable help from Kant, been able to steer clear of this tendency, as we were required to do, and have thereby arrived at the view that the self is a transcendental existence, and, as such, is unique and in a class apart from outer objects. In our further procedure to determine the *what* of the self, it would only behove us not to have recourse to the objectivist standpoint of science. Nor should we fall back upon extra-logical considerations to adopt the archaic means which, instead of solving the problem of self, proves a way of escape from it, through transcendence from the finite self to the Infinite Self. The limits thus set to the way of solving this problem, of course, seem much too severe. But once it is brought home

to the metaphysician that this problem is ultimately transcendental, and that it needs to be solved with reference to the available transcendental data, he will be relieved of doubt about its genuineness and about the possibility of its solution. Actually, such data are there. They are (i) that the self is gifted with the sense of value and the feeling of obligation; (ii) that it is not solitary, but only one among many of its kind. What, then, is the self as demanded by this twofold datum?

VIII

THE NATURE OF SELF

IN view of the negative results of our investigation of the problem of self, we find ourselves in a position to answer the above question briefly as follows. Value, not being a thing or a quality, nor being anything apart from the self, is not to be found anywhere except in the self's feeling of obligation, which means that this feeling is the essence of value. But obligation also is not a thing or a quality. It is, as we should say, a relation, a tie that binds the self with the feeling of it, with something else. But this relation is evidently so peculiar that the 'something else' cannot be of the nature of outer objects. It is not that the self cannot have relation with outer objects. On the contrary, in knowing an outer object, the self is obviously in relation with it. And further, the relation in question is direct and immediate and, as we have insisted time and again, unique, being in a class apart from spatio-temporal relations. The uniqueness of the cognitive relation finds expression in the fact that the self in this relation *knows*, and the outer object in it is *known* to it. But even then, the point is that the relation involved in the feeling of obligation is unique in an altogether different sense. Whereas a thing as known is an object, nay, an outer object, a not-self, that towards which the self has the feeling of obligation cannot be an *object*, far less an outer object or a not-self, but must be a self itself. This means that the relation involved in the feeling of obligation, unlike the cognitive relation, demands *parity* of the terms. That which is *known* is not, nor can, in its turn, be a *knower* as the self that knows is. But that towards which the self has the feeling of obligation can, and also should, have the same feeling towards the latter.

Thus, the feeling of obligation being granted, as it ought to be done, the demand arises that there must be more selves than one. But a demand made is not a demand fulfilled. The fulfilment of a demand needs *proof* of what is demanded. And what is demanded here is the *existence* of many selves. But the proof required cannot be had out of

value and obligation; it must refer to cognitional experience and yet be transcendental, not empirical, because the *existence* which is in need of proof is not that of outer objects but of selves. It is precisely such a proof of the existence of many selves that we have already had out of the consideration of the fact of the sharing of cognitional experience and inter-subjective communication.

The demand of the feeling of obligation being thus fulfilled, we find ourselves absolutely debarred from speaking of the self as such-and-such by itself as we usually do of outer objects, and what we are obviously entitled to say about it is that it *is in relation* with other selves. But in view of the parity of the terms in the relation involved in the feeling of obligation, we soon discover that the relation is *mutuality*, which is unparalleled, being in a class apart not only from spatial and temporal relations but from the cognitive relation between the self and outer objects. In the light of this discovery the place of the question: 'What is self?' is taken by the question: 'What are selves?', and the answer to the latter is that selves are in one another. What is meant is not, however, that I am not distinct from you or you are not distinct from me. On the contrary, we are distinct from one another. But this is so on account of the fact that we are *persons*, and that our personality includes physical, biological and psychological factors which naturally vary from one person to another. As selves, we are not separate entities, but are in one another with the feeling of ourselves as being essential to one another, unless—and this is, as we shall see later, of paramount importance in regard to the practical aspect of the problem of self—it so happens that our sense of values and our feeling of obligation are obscured by Ignorance (in Sanskrit, *Avidyā*).

The solution of the problem of self outlined above rules out as irrelevant the question of freedom and immortality on the ground that it is based on the fictitious idea of the self as an entity. The problem of the mutual *relation* of selves, which is discussed on the empirical level, but without any satisfactory result, in the sciences of society and the State, and which is solved on the transcendent level in religion in terms of belief in God, is also ruled out as irrelevant on the ground that selves being, in fact, essential to one another, it cannot arise. What we really mean here is that selves are sufficient unto themselves, of course, not separately but mutually, and that their mutual relation is an accomplished fact, standing in no need of being established or determined by

a superior agency, divine or secular, God or the State. Religion in the ordinary sense, however, creates a fiction in the shape of the so-called religious obligation, obligation to the Divine Personality regarded as superior to man, and treats it as the highest of all human obligations. Likewise, most of the theories of the State labour under the prejudice that political obligation, obligation to the State, stands on an independent basis. But the truth seems to be that all obligations ultimately point to the essentiality of selves to one another, and that nothing is of real value, which, in the final analysis, is not found to express the community of a self with a self. Even in the appreciation of the beauty of Nature, Nature ceases to be foreign to the self that appreciates her beauty, and bears the reflection of the self only to be in community with it. What is thus true of beauty seems to be equally true of whatever else is considered as a value. This, incidentally, brings within view a fundamental axiom on which Axiology is based, and with reference to which this branch of knowledge has to work out the details of the value-theory.

IX

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SELF AND THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM OF HUMAN LIFE

IN its preoccupation with fictitious problems like those that have been considered above, the philosophy of self has generally remained unconscious of a problem which is not only genuine but of vital importance to man's practical life. Even when this problem has come to be treated of, it has not been viewed in the proper perspective, much less solved in an appropriate manner. The problem relates to the obscurantism by Ignorance of the sense of values and the feeling of obligations, which is a fact in the case of the majority of mankind, if not in that of all men. The prevalence among the human race throughout its history of pain, misery and suffering is due to want, in the minds of men, of the feeling of themselves as being essential to one another—a want which is ultimately the product of Ignorance. This must be admitted, and its admission cannot be condemned as pessimistic except by those who are rendered blind to the tragic spectacle of human suffering by their own favourable circumstances and their general attitude of listlessness and apathy, or by those who have the temerity or the wickedness to declare that there is no suffering which does not reveal the mystery of happiness.

The problem under consideration has two obvious peculiarities. One lies in that its concern with obligation and duty is *negative*, not positive. What is meant is that no problem worth the name arises in so far as we *do* discharge our obligations, and *do* perform our duties, just as no genuine problem arises in so far as we *do* know. But in so far as we *do not* discharge our obligations, and *do not* perform our duties, there arises in the philosophy of self a serious problem, just as there arises in epistemology a similar one in so far as we only seem to know, but really *do not*.

It is necessary to notice in this connection that hardly any problem

arises for the philosophy of self to deal with which relates to obligation and duty positively. Of course, it is a problem of supreme importance to an individual to ascertain what precisely his specific obligations and duties are. But this problem, despite its intimate relation to the philosophy of self, is such that it is mainly dependent for its solution upon the consideration of the peculiar outer circumstances of his life and his peculiar inner capabilities, which naturally falls outside the scope of the philosophy of self. For this reason it is of no direct concern to this branch of knowledge. In any case, in order to decide whether a problem positively related to obligation and duty is genuine, it is necessary to consider the solution that is offered to it. If the solution consists merely in laying bare, as we have already done, the implication of obligation in terms of the essentiality of selves to one another, the problem solved is not related to obligation as such, but to the nature of the self, and is thus genuine. But if the solution is to be found in transcendence from the concept of obligation and consequent admission of such things as *freedom*, *immortality* and *God*, the problem solved, as we have previously seen, is fictitious.

The second peculiarity of the problem before us is that it is of a practical nature, nay, as previously observed, of the most vital importance to the practical life of man, pointing as it does to the greatest and the most urgent task to which he has to address himself—the task of his restoration to his self through the removal of the effect of Ignorance consisting in the prevention of his feeling of himself as being essential to his fellow-men. Despite the fact that the problem is thus practical, it has, however, a theoretical aspect, and, in fact, belongs to the province of the philosophy of self. The reason is that the task in question is to be performed in conformity with the fundamental principle of practical life, and that this principle, as we shall see later, needs to be formulated in terms of a certain 'Idea' of the self. From this point of view, wise indeed are those philosophers who have come to realize that mere theoretical consideration of things does not constitute the entire business of philosophy, and that this branch of knowledge has to deal with the highest practical problem of human life which naturally falls outside the scope of all other branches of knowledge.

The problem as stated above indicates that the *highest* aim of man's empirical life is the *undoing* of a thing, viz., the effect of Ignorance rather than the *doing* of anything. In other words, it is negative rather

than positive. That selves are essential to one another is an accomplished *fact*.¹ And, as we have previously seen, there is no going beyond this fact, and, consequently, there is nothing to achieve beyond it. If selves be not, as a matter of fact, essential to one another, nothing that is *done* can render any of them essential to any other. But, on the other hand, it is a fact that men are generally prevented, due to the influence of Ignorance, from feeling themselves as being essential to one another. And so long as they are dominated by Ignorance, their *doing* anything is as good as, or rather worse than, their not doing anything at all. This is precisely the reason why the highest aim of human life is negative in the sense in question.

Now, the solution of what we have called the highest practical problem of human life naturally demands the formulation of a code of discipline and the observance of it with a view to the removal of the effect of Ignorance. Both these things are, of course, of utmost practical importance; and this has perhaps never been so generally and persistently realized as had been done by the ancient philosophers in India. But given a code of discipline, however well-formulated, and supposing that there are people to observe it as faithfully as possible, it may be, and it is generally the actual case, that their highest practical aim is not fulfilled—the effect produced upon them by Ignorance is not removed nor, consequently, are they awakened to the feeling of themselves as being essential to one another. This situation is perhaps worse than its opposite, where there is no code of discipline, and none observes any. For the former runs the risk of degeneration from which the latter is obviously free—the risk of encouraging the observance of rules and the performance of rites for their own sake, or of arousing in the minds of men a false sense of self-importance and complacency, and worse still, of leading men towards fanaticism and even hypocrisy. What is meant, however, is not that there should be no code of discipline nor that men need not observe any discipline at all. On the contrary, they stand at a situation which demands a well-formulated code of discipline and their strict and faithful observance of it. But then, what is all-important about any code of discipline is not the particular rules of conduct but the fundamental principle to which all such rules should conform. Perhaps no particular rule of conduct is universally applic-

¹ This speaks of rational optimism as opposed to irrational optimism which denies the reality of pain, misery and suffering.

able. Likewise, no particular disciplinary rite is worthy of universal recommendation. Particular disciplinary rules or rites should naturally vary with the variation of the peculiarities of human nature and of the circumstances of man's life. But the same is not true of the fundamental principle of practical life. It is unconditionally binding on each and every man, and all men should obey it, while observing any particular rule of conduct or performing any particular disciplinary rite. So the solution of the highest practical problem of human life is dependent upon man's obedience to the fundamental principle of practical life, the understanding of which is of vital importance in the philosophy of self in its practical aspect.

THE PROBLEM OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRACTICAL PRINCIPLE

THE most important point about the fundamental principle of practical life is that it is not itself a rule of conduct but the foundation upon which all such rules should rest. This distinction between the *principle* of practical life and the *rules* of conduct should be borne in mind in order that the true nature of the highest practical problem of human life may not be lost sight of, and the chance of solving it be not missed once for all. But to this end it is further necessary to realize that the fundamental principle, to which all rules of conduct are to conform, should be related to the self as distinguished from the outside world, because otherwise the rules conforming to it would not have the sense of rules of *conduct*. This proposition is not likely to be seriously challenged by anyone except the advocates of extreme environmentalism, which is allied with positivism, naturalism and materialism; and about environmentalism it is enough to say that it is vitiated by the erroneous understanding of the self as a mere part of Nature. But then, the question is: How is the fundamental principle of practical life related to the self, and, in particular, what is it, granted that it is so related? With this question bearing upon the highest practical problem of human life, the philosophy of self arrives at the most critical stage of its enquiry. But the answer must be found in order that this problem may not be left unsolved and the pursuit of philosophy may not prove useless.

The fundamental principle of practical life should naturally consist in a sort of awareness, or rather spiritual awakening, on the part of the self. This is, of course, difficult to realize. But on the understanding of the peculiarity of the highest practical problem of human life the difficulty would disappear, as had been the case with some of the earlier philosophers, especially those in ancient India. Nevertheless, difficulty

reappears as to the precise nature of the spiritual awakening which is to be regarded as the fundamental principle of practical life. The view that was generally held by ancient Indian philosophers and is still held by some of their followers in modern times is that this principle is the self's awakening to its essential nature, and that conduct as based on such awakening is the means of man's rescue from the influence of Ignorance and of his release from pain, misery and suffering or of his liberation from bondage. The merit of this view, however, lies on its very surface. It consists in the realization of the truth that the final remedy for the ills from which man suffers is to be found within himself and not anywhere outside him. But the question is whether the fundamental practical principle should really be related to the self's awakening to its essential nature.

It should be borne in mind that the problem before us is: What should be the fundamental principle of practical life so that by behaving in conformity with it we may be able to secure deliverance from the influence of Ignorance? The problem thus stated obviously presupposes that we are already under the influence of Ignorance, and, consequently, are unaware of the essential nature of our self and shall continue to remain so as long as the problem exists for us. Our awakening to the essential nature of our self is, therefore, out of the question prior to the solution of the problem. How can it then serve to solve it? The fact is that our awakening to the essential nature of our self is not the *means*, but the *end*, of our deliverance from the influence of Ignorance. And this brings to light the glaring confusion between means and end that is involved in the view of the fundamental principle of practical life under discussion. This view is open to another difficulty, in fact, an equally serious one which, as we shall see below, is consequent upon what it ignores rather than what it recognizes about the nature of the self.

The Indian philosophers of the orthodox (*āstika*) schools,¹ with whom we are specially concerned here, are divided among themselves in their view of the self. The members of the Advaita-Vedānta school,

¹ The orthodox schools of Indian philosophy are those which believe in the authority of the Vedas and are on this account sharply divided from the heterodox (*nāstika*) schools which reject this authority, viz., the Cārvāka materialists, the Jainas and the Baudddhas. The former are: Nyāya-Vaisesika, Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta, the last being subdivided into a number of schools of which the two respectively led by Saṃkara and Rāmāṇjua and called Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita are the most prominent.

who are advocates of unqualified monism, hold that the self is *one* and identical with Brahman which, according to them, is the undifferentiated Absolute. Those who belong to another popular and influential school of Vedānta philosophy called Visistādvaita and advocate qualified monism hold, on the one hand, that the self is not one, but *many*, because Brahman, being, in their view, the Divine Personality, cannot be the undifferentiated Absolute, but must be One-in-many. But, on the other hand, they are committed to the view that the self is in a sense *one* because of the oneness of the Divine Personality who is essential to the many selves, and from whom they are inseparable. Lastly, the philosophers with affiliation to the schools of Nyāya-Vaisesika, Mīmāṃsā and Sāṃkhya, however they may differ among themselves in their view of the nature of self, generally advocate uncompromising pluralism in their understanding of the self, with the result that selves, in their view, are not only many but are individually self-sufficient, each with a distinct status of its own.

Now, the first view is absolutely unable to recognize the essentiality of selves to one another for the simple reason that the admission of the self in the plural, which is necessary to this end, is ultimately out of the question in its case. And for just the opposite reason the same inability is characteristic of the third and the last view. In its case the absolute self-sufficiency of each self precludes the essentiality of one self to another. The second view, however, seems at first sight to be, in this respect, different from either of these two. But really it is not so, because the Divine Personality who, according to it, is essential to the individual selves, and to whom they are essential, obviously leaves them aloof from one another with no prospect of one individual self's being essential to any other. Thus, all these views leave out of account, in one way or another, that very aspect of the self which, as we have already seen, is brought to light by the consideration of value and obligation, viz., the self's essentiality to others of its kind. And not being based on this consideration which, as we have argued, is the proper basis of the understanding of the self, they are obviously in the dark about the true nature of the self. So, even granted that the self's awakening to its essential nature is the means of its deliverance from the influence of Ignorance and of its liberation from bondage, this means understood in terms of the views of the self under consideration would leave the influence of Ignorance over the self unaffected, with

the result that the self would remain firmly established in the state of bondage, instead of being delivered therefrom.

But it would naturally be objected that in the absence of the self's awakening to its essential nature, no matter how it is conceived essentially to be, its awareness of its being under the influence of Ignorance and in the state of bondage would be out of the question, with the result that it could never be aware of the problem concerning the removal of the effect of Ignorance upon it or its liberation from bondage. If the self's awakening to its essential nature should, then, be regarded as the presupposition of its awareness of this problem, why should not, so the objection would continue, the same awakening on the part of the self be the means of its solution consisting in the self's deliverance from the influence of Ignorance and its liberation from bondage? To this objection our reply is as follows.

Ignorance is not mere *absence of knowledge* but a creative power, as is evident from the fact that a considerable part, though not the whole, of man's suffering is produced by it. The self's awakening to its essential nature, on the contrary, seems to be mere *apprehension* of the real *fact* about itself—an apprehension which can neither destroy nor create. That being so, it cannot be credited with the power to destroy the effects of Ignorance and to bring about liberation from bondage. Of course, the fact remains that the self's awakening to its essential nature is out of the question prior to its deliverance from the influence of Ignorance. But that seems to be no reason why the problem which we have called the highest practical problem of human life cannot arise for man in one form or another. While being under the influence of Ignorance, none can, of course, be aware of his being so any more than the dreamer can be of the fact of his dreaming. But the same is not true of man's pain, misery and suffering, the effects produced by Ignorance. Man not only suffers, but is also aware of his suffering; and further he is naturally anxious to get rid of it; and this not because of his *awakening* to the essential nature of his self, but because of the *essential nature* of his self as such. To the essence of the self belongs the tendency to feel dissatisfied with pain, misery and suffering, with evils and disvalues in general, and to seek for the necessary remedy. Hence the highest practical problem of human life—the problem concerning the remedy for the evil effects produced by Ignorance, remedy for whatever is of the nature of disvalue.

Now, as regards the solution of this problem, it is perhaps natural to argue that, since pain, misery and suffering or evils in general are effects produced by the power called Ignorance, recourse should be had to a *power* capable of destroying or at least resisting these effects. But who, it would be most pertinent to ask, can be sure that the power which resists certain evils will not by that very act or otherwise produce the same evils or certain others, including even those before which the evils resisted will pale into insignificance? If the consequence of the employment of power in the resistance of evil in the world of human affairs through the ages be carefully investigated, the finding will perhaps go to establish that it begets more evil than good. The fact is that the very idea of employing power to resist evil springs from the same source as evil itself, viz., Ignorance, and so is a sheer absurdity. Hence the wisdom of the Christian precept: 'resist no evil' as well as of the Indian teaching that self-knowledge (*ātma-jñāna*), which is no power, is the way to freedom from suffering or liberation from bondage. But self-knowledge, as previously observed, is out of the question on the plane where suffering or evil prevails, that is, the plane of Ignorance. Besides, it neither creates nor destroys. The Christian precept, though, as we shall see below, it is of the highest practical importance, is after all negative in letter if not in spirit.

There is no getting away from admitting that the solution of a practical problem like that of the remedy for suffering, evil and disvalue cannot be had from a mere teaching or precept, but is in need of being achieved in and through a certain way of life. What is meant is fully brought out by the common saying: 'example is better than precept'. But it does not follow that the solution in demand has nothing to do with precept. On the contrary, the way of life in which it is to be found should be indicated; and this is possible only through a precept. The precept in question should, of course, have a positive meaning. But what it positively means is a way of life which is to be lived and not taught. Its expression should, on this very account, be negative. Moreover, it should have a *direct* and *immediate* bearing upon the problem concerned. Both these requirements are obviously fulfilled by the precept: 'resist no evil'. So the solution we are in search of is to be found in the way of life corresponding to, and positively meant by, this very precept.

The difficulty of the realization of the way of life in question is,

however, such as can hardly be exaggerated. The rule to which man naturally submits his conduct is: 'resist evil' instead of 'resist no evil'. Yet all is not dark and dismal in his day-to-day life, the life he lives under the influence of Ignorance. This life of man is on occasion illumined by the light of forgiveness, sympathy and love. And this, be it taken notice of by social psychology, is due to his *being* transcendently essential to his fellow-men. So the fact is that man's life on earth, the only kind of life that it is given to him to live—while being governed by his natural inclinations, which really constitute his share of the universal Ignorance of mankind—contains visible manifestations of his transcendental self in the shape of the nobler sentiments. This is indeed significant in that Ignorance, which plays its appointed rôle in man's life, is not absolute but relative—relative to what may be called Practical Reason; and, contrarily, that Practical Reason, which is an essential element in his life, is of no use except in relation to Ignorance.

The fact, however, is that in the case of the majority of human beings Ignorance prevails over Practical Reason, with the result that their way of life is based on the dictates of their biological motives more or less divorced from the sentiments of forgiveness, sympathy and love. In the case of some others, on the other hand, Practical Reason gains the upper hand so as to lead them to the illusory idea of a way of life guided by the light of Practical Reason and untouched by the shadow of Ignorance. These two ways of life, both extremes, however, meet, as extremes generally do, at a common point, viz., the denial of the meaning of life. The former, characterized by sensualism and worldly-mindedness, flourishes in an atmosphere of evil of its own creation, and the latter, obviously ascetic and other-worldly, is conspicuous for its retreat from the sphere of evil. Thus both equally leave Ignorance unchecked, evil unremedied and suffering unredressed. So the way of life in demand should avoid both the extremes and be based on the integration of Ignorance and Practical Reason. This brings us to the question of the function of Practical Reason in the life of man—a question which has received consideration only from a few philosophers, of whom Kant is one and perhaps the most prominent.

Now, Practical Reason is directly concerned with our *action* and stands in contrast with Theoretical Reason, which is concerned with our *knowledge*. That being so, the function of Practical Reason can be best understood, as Kant tried to understand, in contrast with that of

Theoretical Reason. According to Kant, the special business of Theoretical Reason is to contribute the categories and principles needed for our knowledge of the world. But at the same time he attributed to this faculty the tendency to go beyond the world as known in terms of the categories and principles, and thereby to envisage 'Ideas' or 'ideals'. The position of the 'Ideas' of Theoretical Reason, in Kant's view, is, however, curious. They neither contribute to our knowledge of the world nor can they, with all the practical significance that they may command, be of direct use in the solution of our practical problem which, according to him, is: 'What ought we to do?', as distinguished from our theoretical problem which, in his view, is: 'What can we know?'. It is in view of this situation that Kant declared that the solution of this practical problem entirely rests upon Practical Reason, and that it is to be solved in terms of the deliverances of Practical Reason, which, according to him, are certain 'Postulates' as distinguished from the 'Ideas' of Theoretical Reason—the Postulates concerning Freedom and Immortality of the soul and the existence of God. But it is this position that leaves him exposed to the difficulties previously mentioned¹—difficulties which cannot be removed except through the revision of his view of the nature of Theoretical Reason and Practical Reason, viz., that they are respectively the faculties of 'Ideas' and 'Postulates'.

As our previous examination of Kant's epistemological position has shown, there is hardly any reason to justify Kant's view that our knowledge of the world necessarily involves contributions from our understanding, and that Theoretical Reason is, therefore, a faculty of a priori concepts. But to go further to hold, as Kant does, that it is also within the competence of this faculty to contemplate 'Ideas' or 'ideals' seems to be the height of the misunderstanding of its function. Theoretical Reason, the faculty of knowledge, is by its very nature exclusively concerned with *facts*, while it is the special prerogative of Practical Reason to contemplate 'Ideas' or 'ideals'. And this makes it clear that Kant ascribes to Theoretical Reason the function which properly belongs to Practical Reason. But, on the other hand, he equally misunderstands the function of Practical Reason. The 'Postulates', which, according to Kant, it belongs to the credit of Practical Reason to deliver, are all concerned with supposed matters of fact—the freedom

¹ *Vide supra*, pp. 252-3.

and immortality of the soul and the existence of God. But the faculty which is, strictly speaking, concerned with matters of fact, is that of knowledge or, in Kantian terminology, Theoretical Reason, and not, as Kant holds, Practical Reason. So Kant's view of the respective functions of Theoretical Reason and Practical Reason should be revised in terms of the view that the faculty of 'Ideas' or 'ideals' is Practical Reason and not Theoretical Reason, and that the latter is concerned with *facts*, whereas the former can only contemplate 'Ideas' or 'ideals' but has no 'Postulates' to deliver concerning matters of fact.

This view of the function of Practical Reason easily enables us to realize that the integration of Ignorance and Practical Reason can only mean the submission of the natural inclinations or biological motives to the authority of the 'Idea' or 'Ideas' of Practical Reason. And this indicates that it is through the 'Idea' or 'Ideas' of Practical Reason that discovery is to be made of the fundamental practical principle, obedience to which is the key-note of *ideal life*, the life that is worth living as distinguished from the purely *natural* life, the life that is ordinarily lived.

IDEAL LIFE AND THE IDEA OF PRACTICAL REASON

THERE is no getting away from the fact that our natural inclinations or biological motives cannot be eliminated without our ceasing to be. Their elimination is, therefore, out of the question. And the truth is that they have a legitimate place in ideal life. If ideal life means, as it should be taken to mean, liberated life, liberation should not be conceived of as survival of the soul consequent upon the death of 'flesh and blood' or, to use a term of Indian philosophy, 'videha-mukti' (liberation in and through the disembodied state). In order that liberation may not be an idle dream, but a realizable goal and a goal worthy of realization, it should be, as some of the Indian philosophers held, 'jivan-mukti', that is, liberation in and through mundane life—life with its physical and biological basis. But, then, it is a fact that our natural inclinations left to themselves are apt to produce pain, misery and suffering to ourselves as well as to our fellow-men and to prove thereby a source of evil and disvalue. Add to this the consideration that resistance to evil defeats its own purpose, and you will have, it would be urged, no escape from the position that liberation in and through mundane life is an idle dream and an unrealizable goal.

But why should the situation be so difficult, nay, hopeless, as it is thus presented to be? Our natural inclinations or biological motives need not be left to themselves nor, therefore, should there arise the necessity of resisting evil. There is our Practical Reason with its 'Idea' or 'Ideas', to the authority of which they should be submitted in order that we may not miss the chance of enlightening ourselves and refining our sentiments, and remain condemned to barbarism. This, of course, brings us to the question as to what the 'Idea' or 'Ideas' of Practical Reason are. But this question is such that it cannot be considered by

itself; in fact, any attempt to answer it separately would be absolutely futile. It is really a part of the wider question: What condition or conditions should be fulfilled in order that the essentiality of selves to one another, which is a transcendently established fact, may be brought to bear upon the empirical life of man? And this incidentally goes to show that this wider question is the practical correlate, on the empirical level, of the transcendental question: 'What are selves?', which needs to be answered in terms of the view that selves are not self-sufficient entities but are essential to one another.

It should, however, be borne in mind that whereas we stand united on the solid ground of values, we fall asunder in the chaos of disvalues. Disvalue is a disturbing and disruptive agent. It renders the self unstable in itself, and estranges it from other selves. Testimony to this fact is borne by the effects produced by the passions of anger, fear, jealousy, hatred, etc., which follow in the footsteps of disvalue, and are really disvalues in themselves. And this goes to show that our natural inclinations may prove a menace to the essentiality of selves to one another. Should not, then, the empirical realization of this characteristic feature of selves be said to demand the elimination of the productivity of disvalue on the part of our natural inclinations? The answer in the affirmative perhaps seems more natural than that in the negative. And those who offer the former are likely to hold that practical discipline of some kind or other is the means of the elimination in question. The necessity of discipline in practical life none can, however, make bold to deny. But the question of practical discipline is inseparable from the question of the fundamental principle of conduct. What, then, should be the fundamental principle of conduct on which practical discipline must be based in order that it may serve to eliminate the productivity of disvalue on the part of our natural inclinations? The reply should naturally be that it is some such thing as self-knowledge, that is, awakening of the self to its essential nature. But this would be reviving the difficulties which have already come within our view—difficulties that are in need of removal. Moreover, the precept of paramount importance in practical life, the Christian precept: 'resist no evil', is definitely dissuasive of the elimination in question. Lastly, the productivity of disvalue cannot be eliminated without the elimination of the powers to which they belong, viz., our natural inclinations or biological motives, which is out of the question

in as much as it would amount to the denial of the meaning of life, nay, the cessation of life itself.

Since the elimination of our natural inclinations, or of the productivity of disvalue on their part, or even of disvalue as such, as we should have the wisdom to realize, is at least not feasible, the demand of the possibility of our empirical realization of the essentiality of ourselves to one another should be modest, but should on no account fall short of the abolition of the effects produced on us by disvalue, viz., the instability of ourselves and our estrangement from one another. Even this modest demand, it must be admitted, is not easy of fulfilment. But its fulfilment is not impracticable. On the contrary, Practical Reason—the faculty with which man is naturally gifted—can, if duly cultivated and educated, produce within him the remedy for the effects of disvalue. I *suffer* and I feel miserable and shaken within myself and estranged from those of my neighbours who are happy. But if my Practical Reason is so cultivated and educated as to awaken me to the virtue of *fortitude*, I may well be able to avoid these effects of my suffering and to remain settled within myself and in amicable relation with my more fortunate neighbours. Considerations of this kind, however, go to show that the question of the remedy for the effects produced by disvalue upon human personality is inseparable from the question of Virtue.

Now, the problem of Virtue is, of course, of paramount importance in philosophy in its practical aspect. Philosophers everywhere and in all ages have discussed this problem, and not always without satisfactory results. The layman also is not unconcerned with this problem; and he too is not without his solution of it. But it has generally so happened that a certain virtue, which hardly deserves the name or is of a low order, has been extolled by the layman as well as by the philosopher, whereas a certain other, which is really of a high order, has received scant recognition from either. And distinction has sometimes been drawn—with perhaps no idea in view except that of dividing, of course arbitrarily, one class of people from another, and even of establishing, equally arbitrarily, the superiority of one class to another—between the virtues of people belonging to different occupational groups, between the virtues of the so-called ‘civilized’ people and those of the so-called ‘barbarians’, between the virtues of the ‘master’ and those of the ‘slave’. All this is, however, due to the

failure to realize the truth that the Virtues, especially those that are 'cardinal', are primarily remedies for, or ways of abolishing, the effects produced by disvalue on human personality.

This truth obviously implies that the cardinal virtues have a common characteristic, irrespective of what they severally are. In order that they may serve, as they are intended to do, as remedies for the effects produced by disvalue on human personality, they must meet the justice of the situation. The situation is: I am fallen off the state of my essentiality to my fellow-men, my mind is weighed upon by the passion of anger or hatred or jealousy as the case may be, and I feel unsettled within myself and estranged from others. Such a situation is, indeed, undesirable, so that it renders me liable to justice in the shape of retribution—retribution not externally determined nor externally imposed, because such retribution does not really meet the justice demanded by the situation nor does help me out of it—but retribution consisting in self-mortification and self-affliction. Thus the cardinal virtues demand of their possessor the acceptance of the surest and the most effective means of his restoration to his essential nature—the twofold means of self-mortification and self-affliction. This is true of fortitude, of penitence and, in fact, of all the virtues that deserve to be called cardinal.

The common characteristic of the cardinal virtues as indicated above, however, shows the way to the discovery of the 'Idea' or 'Ideas' of Practical Reason. An 'Idea' has no *fact* to tell us about. It only signifies a principle, or rather a regulative principle. And the regulative principle signified by an 'Idea' of Practical Reason obviously relates to *doing* or conduct, and not to *knowing* or thinking.¹ It instructs us as to how we *ought to act*, not as to how we ought to *know* or *think*. Moreover, while knowing or thinking not only relates to the self—the self as knower or thinker—but to not-selves, the things known or thought of, doing or conduct relates primarily, if not exclusively, to the self. Hence it is plain that in an 'Idea' of Practical Reason, or in the regulative principle of conduct signified by it, the self is central. But the self in question is the self *in idea*, not the self *in fact*, because the latter,

¹ Our knowledge of things is regulated by *facts* about them, and not by any 'Idea' whatsoever. Strictly speaking, Theoretical Reason is concerned with *facts* on their own account and has no 'Idea' to deliver. Practical Reason, on the contrary, has no concern with *facts* on their own account, but only delivers 'Ideas' signifying regulative principles of conduct.

as transcendently shown, is essential to others of its kind and, consequently, is such that it is unconcerned with any regulative principle of conduct. What, then, is the *idea* of the self in demand? The answer we need not, however, go far to seek. It is to be found through the consideration of the common characteristic of the cardinal virtues. And this for the simple reason that the regulative principles of conduct are but the media of the expression of the virtues in action. In the light of this consideration, the *idea* of the self in demand cannot be said to do without reference to self-mortification and self-affliction. But since self-mortification and self-affliction constitute the retribution which the self earns for itself on account of disvalue, this *idea* is that of the self as bearer of the 'cross' of disvalue.¹ The position thus reached, however, needs clarification, which may be offered as follows.

Why there is Ignorance or why my self, which is really essential to other selves, is fallen off this state, and why it is set in the background of 'flesh and blood' pregnant with natural inclinations or biological motives—these are questions which raise no greater nor less difficulty than the question why I have to live the kind of life that it is given to me to do. None of these questions admit of answer, nor do they demand any. They only point to a practical problem, in fact, the highest and the most fundamental practical problem of human life—the problem of liberation. And the nature of liberation is also indicated by these very questions. Liberation does not consist in the achievement of any goal beyond empirical life, the life that it is given to us to live. It only means the *regeneration* of this very life, which is possible in one way only, viz., through self-mortification and self-affliction. Of course, there may be particular 'goods' or particular 'ends' that are worthy of attainment. But such 'goods' or such 'ends' shine in *worth* only in our empirical life as covered with the gloom of Ignorance, whereas in respect of the regeneration of that very life they are, from the point of view of worth, neutral, that is, neither worthy nor unworthy; and, consequently, they cease to be 'goods' or 'ends' to be realized, without, however, turning out to be evils to be avoided. Nor, in regard to the regeneration of empirical life, can the place of particular 'goods' or particular 'ends' be said to be taken by the Good or the Ultimate End;

¹ This figurative expression of the *idea* of self may be excused in view of its reference to the example of a self that remains unsurpassed in bearing retribution on account of disvalue. The example is the Christ on the Cross.

because the need of a 'good' or an 'end' as such is only due to the peculiarity of empirical life, and because the regeneration of this life means the return of the self to the feeling of itself as being essential to other selves, which feeling constitutes the joy of living,¹ but which is not a 'good' nor an 'end', but a *fact* about the real nature of the self. And precisely on this ground the view of 'self-realization' as the Good or the Ultimate End, which has sometimes been advocated by moralists, is only a subterfuge.

If liberation cannot thus mean realization of any 'good' or 'end', it cannot also mean the opposite of realization, viz., sacrifice. Of course, self-mortification and self-affliction are the means of the regeneration of empirical life in which liberation consists. But they really amount to the negation of a negation, not the negation of anything positive, which is meant by sacrifice. The self's being fallen off the state of its essentiality to other selves is its denial and so a negation, the negation of which is demanded by its essential nature. And it is in self-mortification and self-affliction that the demand is fulfilled. The fact, then, is that realization and its opposite, sacrifice, have meaning only in empirical life as held in the grip of Ignorance, and that in the context of liberation the question of realization and sacrifice, of *having* and *renouncing*, is void of meaning, and its place is taken by the question of duty and virtue.²

Now, the question of duty and virtue, thus having nothing to do with 'goods' or the Good, 'ends' or the Ultimate End, may be said to relate only to the rules of right conduct. But, for the reasons previously explained,³ these rules themselves fall outside the scope of philosophical enquiry, and what philosophy can suitably investigate about them is the fundamental principle to which they should conform or from which they should, in no case, depart. As regards the fundamental principle of conduct, we have, however, had previous assurance that in order to deserve this title it should have the self as its central point of reference.⁴ But the self in question, as argued before, should be the self *in idea* as distinguished from the self *in fact*; and, besides, it should be the self that is the negation of its own negation, as demanded by the solution

¹ The joy of living may be taken to mean what the early Indian philosophers called *ānanda* provided this term is divorced from all mystical significance.

² This, incidentally, offers a suggestion towards the solution of the vexed controversy as to which is more fundamental of the two concepts, the Good and the Right.

³ *Vide supra*, p. 261, and pp. 262-3.

⁴ *Vide supra*, p. 264, and pp. 275-6.

of the problem of liberation in connection with which the question of the fundamental principle of conduct arises. It is in view of these considerations that our position has so far ended in the admission of the self as a bearer of the 'cross' of disvalue.

Nevertheless, our transcendental analysis of Ideal Life with a view to discovering the 'Idea' of Practical Reason remains as yet incomplete, and we are still far from the final solution of the problem of the fundamental principle of conduct. The self that is to be the central point of reference in the fundamental principle of conduct signified by the 'Idea' of Practical Reason should be *purely ideal*. If it is not so, but, on the contrary, is *actual* in one aspect or from one point of view, while being *ideal* in another aspect or from another point of view, it cannot be what it is thus intended to be. And this for the obvious reason that a principle of conduct should naturally be of a *regulative* character, and, consequently, that it cannot include within itself that which is actual in any manner whatsoever. Now, the self as a bearer of the 'cross' of disvalue is, of course, *ideal*. As one of our main conclusions goes, the standpoint of viewing the *actuality* or *reality* of the self is the transcendental, not the empirical. And from the transcendental standpoint, the self not only is, but feels itself as being, essential to other selves, which feeling constitutes the joy of living. That being so, from this standpoint, the self as a bearer of the 'cross' of disvalue is obviously not actual or real, but *ideal*. Empirically, however, the self is fallen off the state of its essentiality to other selves, and is in bondage. But being, really, that is, transcendentially, not so, it is in need of liberation. And not only the need itself, but its fulfilment concern, and are confined to, empirical life. This is precisely the reason why liberation cannot mean the attainment of anything beyond empirical life; it should rather consist in the regeneration of this very life. But how can the need attain fulfilment, which it should do, if the self does not *actually* bear the 'cross' of disvalue? So, in the context of the problem of liberation, the self as a bearer of the 'cross' of disvalue cannot, from the empirical point of view, remain merely *ideal*, but needs to be actual or real. Consequently, it cannot be the central point of reference in the fundamental principle of conduct signified by the 'Idea' of Practical Reason.

It should be borne in mind that the self as essential to other selves, being the self *in fact*, is out of consideration in the solution of the problem of the fundamental principle of conduct. And, as seen above,

the self as bearer of the 'cross' of disvalue is not the self *in idea* which is demanded by its final solution. The fact, however, remains that the actualization of this self on the empirical level is essential to liberation, and that it cannot be a natural event like the self's being fallen off the state of its essentiality to other selves, but must be due to the operation of a regulative principle called the fundamental principle of conduct. Further, the self that is ideal both empirically and transcendently, that is, the *pure idea* of the self, which we are in search of, should be that which is presupposed by the negation of the negation of the self in itself as signified by the self's bearing of the 'cross' of disvalue.

In the light of the above considerations, the idea of the self in demand should be the *idea* or, rather, the *hypothesis* of the non-existent self—the idea that the self is, *as it were*, not a reality nor an existence in any sense whatsoever, but a mere nothing, a sheer non-existence. This is quite in accord with the fact that in a *regulative principle*, as distinguished from a *law*, nothing can have a legitimate place, far less figure as the focal point, except that which is of a *hypothetical* character, instead of being of the nature of *fact*. Moreover, the negation of the self in itself, the negation of which is demanded by liberation, is the false appearance of the self as a self-subsistent and self-sufficient entity, viz., an ego, so that the final guarantee of the negation of the ego cannot be secured except through the *idea* of the nothingness of that which appears as an ego, viz., the self. The real point, however, is that none would undergo, as he is required to do, the purificatory process of self-mortification and self-affliction except in so far as he comes to feel oppressed by the ravages done by his ego and is, consequently, led to realize that the final remedy for the oppression lies in conduct proceeding from the *idea* of the nothingness of his self. And this reveals the significant truth that the bearing of the 'cross' of disvalue is only another name for the general pattern of conduct as based on the regulative principle with the *idea* of the nothingness of the self as its central point and as characterized by complete absence of ego-consciousness.

It is worth while to realize that my action as the action of my self regarded as an individual ego (*jīvātman*) would obviously be egoistic. In any case, it would be no expression of my self as such, so that the possibility of its being right would be out of the question. And not only no better result would follow, but the situation would worsen if

my action were related to a more enlarged entitative conception of my self, say, as tribal, racial or national. For this would amount to the replacement of individual egoism by tribal, racial or national egoism, with the result that egoism would gain in strength and in the scope of its productivity of evil. The fact is that the more enlarged is my ego, the less becomes the possibility of my self-expression and the further does my action deviate from the path of rightness. It is precisely for this reason that the enlargement of myself to the furthest limit in my supposed identification with the All, the Absolute One (Brahman), is, from the practical point of view, the most absurd. Such identification would mean absolute egoism and total suppression of the self, with the result that the life of action would be rendered meaningless, and the problem of right conduct would be liquidated. So the theory of action as based upon self-consciousness (*ātma-jñāna*) in any sense whatsoever is no more pertinent to the solution of the problem of liberation than the ordinary theory which recommends the direction of conduct towards the realization of goods or the Good, of ends or the Ultimate End.

Thus, as a result of the employment of the method of transcendental analysis in the treatment of the problem of human life, we have discovered the significant idea of the self as a bearer of the 'cross' of dis-value, and finally reached the hypothesis of the non-existent self. This hypothesis, obviously, has no significance except that of the Idea which Practical Reason has to deliver and, therefore, of the central point in the regulative principle of human conduct. In this sense, it has perhaps never been an essential item in philosophical discovery except in the shape of Buddha's doctrine of *anāttā* ('no self'), to which scholars of Buddhism are wont to attach exclusive metaphysical significance, but which seems to be of predominantly practical import and to bear primarily upon the problem of liberation, as is evident from the fact that the Buddhist concept of *Nirvāṇa* (extinction of egoity or individuality), which is undoubtedly intended to serve as the ultimate basis of right conduct, derives its entire significance from it. Men of religion, however, are not so generally lacking in practical wisdom as philosophers have proved to be. Notwithstanding the fact that the ordinary religious outlook is apt to inflict fatal wound upon human dignity, they have often envisaged the hypothesis of the nothingness of the self and come sometimes to realize its supreme importance in the practical life

of man. Thus the motto of the Vaisnavite devotee is: 'He prayeth best who feeleth himself humbler than even a straw and as tolerant as a tree, and showeth due respect to others, while not caring for respect for himself.' Considered apart from its obvious theological significance, this motto expresses the attitude of truly religious men and the inner spirit of religion which calls for the cultivation of the most human of the human virtues, the virtue of humility or self-effacement.

The essential practical import of the hypothesis of the nothingness of the self (anāntā), however, finds its purest and most piquant expression in a saying of Jesus, true of His own way of life in letter as well as in spirit, which is free from all offensive theological bias, and presumably incompatible with the entire gamut of religious dogmas that Christianity has imposed upon His teachings—the saying: 'He that saveth his life shall lose it, and *he that loseth his life shall keep it unto life eternal.*' Now, 'eternity' is a purely theoretical concept, and it is a matter of dispute whether it is in itself significant or meaningless. But in its practical application it acquires a meaning, viz., *ideal-ness*, which, when ascribed to human life, is definable in terms of the *regeneration* of the natural life of man through the extinction of egoity (Nirvāna) as prescribed by the *idea* of the nothingness of the self, the Idea that Practical Reason has to deliver. With a view to 'eternal life', extinction of egoity or self-effacement should not, however, remain, like the nothingness of the self, a mere *Idea*, but be an actuality which it can be only in and through the bearing of the 'cross' of disvalue. Thus the way of life as lived by Jesus is really the way of the regeneration of the life of 'flesh and blood'. It is that way of life in which humility in its unfettered and fullest development into self-effacement makes for spontaneous self-expression, the expression of the capacity of one's self to enter into the life of others, with the result that the essentiality of selves to one another and the joy of living consisting in the feeling of oneself as being essential to others, which are transcendently established facts, are made ready for empirical actualization in day-to-day life.

Part Four

RELIGION WITHIN THE
BOUNDS OF
PRACTICAL REASON

THE RELIGION THAT FAILS

THE discussions of the foregoing essay cannot be brought to a final conclusion without reference to the view of religion to which they inevitably lead. At the outset it is, however, to be admitted that there may be private roads to the Deity. But at the same time it should be realized that it is not for the philosopher to travel along any such road in order that he may not commit the grave mistake of feeling himself superior to the common herd and fall an easy victim to the sin of spiritual pride. For him there can be no road except that which is common to mankind. Now, this road unquestionably leads to the physical world regarded as a reality. This world is, of course, real to the layman; and it must be equally so to the philosopher unless he is prone to sophistication, in which case he is already lost to the real cause of philosophy. The physical world, by its very existence, however, sets a theoretical problem to the thinking mind—the problem concerning its own nature and the way of its behaviour, no matter whether or not this problem is determined by any other affecting the practical interests of man. In a bygone age when philosophy held absolute sway in the intellectual world, the problem had naturally no escape from the scope of philosophy. But it was shown to be purely scientific by the rise of science as a separate branch of knowledge, despite the prior existence of philosophy. Nevertheless, philosophy is not quite at peace with science, but, on the contrary, is generally on the look out for opportunities to deal with the problem with a view to showing that there is a road to the Deity which is not private but common to all. But, as we have previously argued, this procedure of philosophy amounts, at best, to providing a picture of the physical world as one may wish it to be, and not as it is in itself, or, in other words, to creating a fiction out of this world, instead of bringing out its inner secrets as science seeks to do. And this means that any road to the Deity that philosophy may discover through the solution of the problem concerning the nature

of the physical world and the way of its behaviour is unavoidably private.

The common road, along which the philosopher is called upon to travel, does not, however, terminate at the physical world, but leads on. But that it leads *beyond* the physical world is not so easily perceptible as that it leads *to* this world itself. This is due to the fact that man's vision is naturally outward and cannot be inward unless his mind is disciplined and attains maturation. It is on this account that, even when he is somehow aware of the existence of something inward in addition to that of the outward physical world, he finds it difficult to notice any clear distinction between the two, and is apt to bring the former over to the side, or to understand it on the analogy, of the latter. And it is also on the same account that a prejudice has come to prevail among men, including many philosophers—the prejudice that nothing can be said to be an existence except that which is known as an *object* just as outward things are known, or, in other words, that the truth of existential judgments consists in their empirical verification. Even Kant, who realized, for the first time in the history of European philosophy, that the self is peculiarly inward and cannot be understood in terms, or on the analogy, of the outward physical world, but needs to be clearly distinguished from the latter, could not rise above the prevailing prejudice, with the result that, on the theoretical ground, he found himself unable to recognize the self as an *existence*, and rested content with the conception of it as mere *subject* with a purely logical status. But, as we have made bold to suggest, that which exists need not necessarily be an actual or possible object of our knowledge, but may only be transcendently presupposed by our knowing of things as objects. And, from this point of view, the self, even on the theoretical ground, is not a mere subject, but an existence, and obviously one that is qualitatively distinct from those that are actual or possible objects of our knowledge, viz., physical things.

Thus on the road along which it is given to us to travel there stand, on one side, our selves regarded as existences and irreducible realities, and, on the other, the physical world, common to us all and similarly regarded. As regards the question whether anything else of the nature of existence is discoverable on this road, no matter how it is to be finally answered, the answer, at first sight, seems to be in the negative, for the simple reason that whatever else may be said to be an existence

must be either outward or inward, and that there can be nothing more outward than the physical world and nothing more inward than our self. It should, however, be borne in mind that the *distinction* between the inward and the outward realities only points to the irreducibility of the one to the other. But, then, even this distinction may be denied, or at least ignored, as philosophers have often done. And it may be held that that which is ultimately real or may finally be said to *be* is neither purely inward nor purely outward, but both or else, neither. This view obviously amounts to annulling the validity of our primary belief in the ultimate reality of the outward physical world *and* of the inward self. Further, the conception of existence as both outward and inward is obviously self-contradictory and unacceptable except as a matter of mystical faith which cannot but be private. And the conception of it as neither, though not self-contradictory, points to something indeterminate and indeterminable and so is as good as nothing to the common mind. In any case, the comprehension of ultimate reality regarded as identical with existence conceived of in either way would demand a capacity that could belong to ultimate reality as such and not to any part thereof. And if religious significance were attached to ultimate reality thus regarded, it could be so done by bringing religion to ruin.

But we are as yet not quite out of the wood. For to view ultimate reality as both outward and inward or else as neither, and to relate ultimate reality, thus viewed, to religion—if, of course, religion could still be held to be a possibility—would be just the appropriate thing to do, provided that the self and the physical world must, for some unavoidable reason or other, be judged not to be sufficient unto themselves but to point beyond. That there are such reasons is, however, a widely prevalent belief in the world of philosophic thought—a belief, moreover, too emotionally toned to leave the common mind unmoved. One such reason, as philosophers aver, relates to the alleged *contingency* or dependent character of the self and the physical world. Of course, each single thing or each single event in the physical world is subject to origination and decay and, as scientific knowledge reveals, is but a link (*nidāna*) in a causal series. Likewise, I as an individual human being (*jīvātman*) and others of my kind are dependent, for our subsistence, upon a multi-lateral environment, and have our appointed part to play subject to the biological law of birth, growth and decay.

But even then, the fact remains that we are, or at least are capable of being, conscious of our own contingency, whereas no thing or event in the physical world has the capacity for such consciousness. And in view of this distinction it cannot, merely on the ground that contingency points beyond, be held that that which is beyond ourselves and that which is beyond physical things and physical phenomena—even granted that each is unitary and not multiple—are one and the same. Moreover, even supposing that the two are really not separate, but identical, the supposed unitary *unconditioned condition* must, by its very nature, be *external* to the things of which it is said to be the condition, viz., ourselves and the physical world; and, precisely for this reason, it cannot answer to the definition of ultimate reality, nor can it, strictly speaking, fulfil the demand of religious belief.

The question, however, remains why the condition pointed to by the alleged contingency of ourselves and the physical world must itself be unconditioned, instead of being conditioned by something else which, in its turn, is conditioned by still another thing and so on *ad infinitum*. Obviously there is no reason for the admission of such a thing as the unconditioned condition except the so-called logical demand for the avoidance of infinite regress. But infinite regress, strictly speaking, is a psychological nuisance and bears no logical absurdity about it. And the philosopher, in order that he may not succumb, as he should not do, to mental fatigue, should make no attempt to avoid infinite regress and to put an end to the causal series by calling into existence the unconditioned condition. Granted, however, that the demand in question is, strictly, *logical*, that should be precisely the reason why its fulfilment is not necessarily relevant in deciding an issue concerning *existence*, as we are required to do in dealing with the question whether a contingent existence points to an existence of the opposite kind, viz., the unconditioned. The fact is that in the determination of existence, the testimony of experience, whether direct or indirect—that is, transcendental—is primary and the demand of logic is secondary, and that an unending causal series may well survive in the embrace of experience, in spite of the onslaught of logic. And this brings to light the real crux of the situation, which may be stated thus. Of course, as already observed, each single thing or each single event in the world, being only a link in a causal series, is contingent. But the same cannot be said about the world as a whole,

including ourselves and physical things, without arbitrarily setting aside the idea of it as a whole and reducing it to the status of a part of it and thereby taking for granted the very thing which is really required to be proved, viz., its dependence upon something else. Thus the argument for the existence of the unconditioned condition of ourselves and the physical world involves the glaring fallacy of begging the question.

It should, however, be borne in mind that we, as biological organisms, are part of the physical world and, so, are but links in the gigantic causal series that this world is, but that, as selves, we fall apart from this series, with a distinct status of our own. This inexplicable anomaly of our nature and constitution is the mother of Ignorance (*Avidyā*) which shakes the very foundation of our self-confidence and suppresses our capacity for self-expression, for entering into the lives of others. Thus we are left isolated and helpless, with a feeling of dependence—a feeling which we are naturally apt to project everywhere within the field of our vision. This provides whatever reason there may be to support the admission of the unconditioned condition of ourselves and the physical world—a reason obviously born of Ignorance.

But, then, the self, being no link in a causal series and, therefore, no part in a whole, it would naturally be argued, is precisely the kind of existence in whose case the question of dependence upon the unconditioned condition is unavoidable. And, it would be further urged, this cannot but be so, owing to the fact that there are many selves, and not one only, and that my self or yours is finite and not infinite. Thus the question of the unconditioned condition would not only be reopened, but would, in its present form, be of special importance to religion in as much as the unconditioned condition of selves, it may well be held, should be something of the nature of self called the Supreme Self or God. And once the idea of God enters into the human mind, it would open the flood-gate of those primitive emotions and sentiments of man which induce him to find '*spirit*' everywhere, in the world outside of him as well as within himself, with the result that the idea of the physical world as a mere causal series would melt into the idea of it as of divine significance. In such a circumstance the metaphysician would perhaps feel inclined to join issue with the man of religion and to adopt the view of reality as ultimately one and of divine stature. But apart from the difficulties arising out of the question of the relation of God

to the world including human selves—the difficulties relating to the immanence or transcendence of God which we have previously had occasion to advert to¹—the whole procedure outlined here is unwarranted. The reason is that the selves, as seen above, are *essential* to one another in virtue of their sense of value and their feeling of obligation, so that they are subject to no handicap of limitation or finitude due to their multiplicity, but are sufficient unto themselves, standing in no need of dependence upon anything beyond themselves.

The fact is that if, in spite of the externality of the causal relation, the physical world as held in a causal series is to be, as it must be, regarded as intelligible in itself with nothing about it left unexplained, it would be all the more reasonable to hold the same view about the selves regarded as being essential to one another. But what is, in this respect, crucial in the case of the selves is that they not only *are* essential to one another, but have the capacity for *feeling* themselves as being so, and, consequently, for *realizing* their sufficiency unto themselves. Judged in this light, the self's idea of itself as being finite and imperfect in contrast with a supposed infinite and perfect being would, however, be only the expression of misconceived humility—humility born of ignorance about the self's capacity for self-expression, for entering into the lives of others; and it would mean nothing but the denial of the self's essential dignity. And this cuts the ground from under the feet of the ontological argument which was brought into prominence at first by Anselm and then by Descartes, and which, despite Kant's exposure of the fallacy that lies on its surface, played an all-important part in the philosophy of Hegel. Of course, as Kant argued, the *idea* of a thing does not necessarily lead to its *actual existence*. But, as Descartes merely suggested, but did not demonstrate, and as Hegel went further to try to demonstrate, the idea of an infinite and perfect being is an exception to this rule and has the peculiarity of bearing ontological significance. This, however, goes to show that the ontological argument cannot be finally refuted except in so far as it is shown that the very idea of an infinite and perfect being is unwarranted and illegitimate. So far as Kant is concerned, he not only made no attempt to show this, but, on the contrary, accepted this idea as a legitimate idea of Theoretical Reason; and in this he, as we have observed earlier,² ignored the truth that theoretical reason, the faculty of know-

¹ *Vide ante*, p. 245.

² *Vide ante*, pp. 270-1; also p. 275, footnote.

ledge, is exclusively concerned with fact or existence on its own account, having no *idea of existence* to deliver. But it is this truth, together with the other relating to the denial of the essential dignity of the self by the idea of infinite and perfect existence, that goes to show that the ontological argument is baseless.

The cosmological or causal argument for the existence of the unconditioned condition of the world of selves and Nature and the ontological argument for the reality of an infinite and perfect being, each considered by itself, are, of course, bound to prove false, primarily because neither the idea of the unconditioned condition nor that of an infinite and perfect being is empirically verifiable. But then, it may be contended, both would acquire a new meaning so as to prove valid, if an empirically verifiable fact could suitably be brought to bear upon them. Such a fact, according to many philosophers and, especially, according to those who advance the teleological argument for the existence of God, is that of the purposefulness of the world, of the manifestation of design or intelligent and purposeful adaptation in the universe including the physical world. Since the purposefulness or the manifestation of design in question is *ex hypothesi* a fact and since it cannot be accounted for without reference to a mind having an end in view, a plan to contemplate and to execute, a mind thus regarded, as the teleological argument goes, must be held to *exist*. But even if it be granted that the argument is valid up to this point, the question remains whether the mind whose existence is in demand is one or many, finite or infinite. From the nature of the case, to hold that the mind is one and yet finite would, however, be to offer no plausible answer to the question. But why must the mind be, as the teleological argument usually demands, one and infinite, instead of being a corporation of many finite minds, or let us say, an infinite number of them? The idea of such a corporation, it is worth while to bear in mind, is no mere delusion of the immature and undeveloped mind, but has sometimes resulted from serious philosophical investigation.¹ And this goes to indicate that in arriving at the conception of the mind in question as one and infinite, the teleological argument does not depend upon itself alone, but upon the assumption of the validity of the cosmological and the ontological

¹ In England, James Ward, the author of *The Realm of Ends*, and in America, George Holmes Howison, the personal idealist, to mention only two names, were staunch advocates of the idea of a corporation of finite minds in place of that of One Infinite Mind.

arguments, with the result that, far from removing the difficulty due to the unverifiableness of the idea of the unconditioned condition or of infinite and perfect being, it remains involved in it. From this point of view, the teleological argument would, however, have no real gain even if it could avoid the unsatisfactory view of God as *transcendent* to the world and the equally unsatisfactory view of Him as *immanent* in it, and yield the so-called satisfactory view of the relation between God and the world as transcendental-immanent.

The peculiar difficulty of the teleological argument is, however, due to the fact that it is *analogical*, deducing its conclusion as it does from the analogy of the purposive or planned activity of the human mind. But the difficulty is not merely that the argument is inconclusive, as it must be, being an analogical argument. The question naturally arises whether the supposed analogy at all holds good or, in other words, whether the universe including selves and the physical world bears unchallengeable testimony to the manifestation within it of design or adaptations of means to ends. And in view of the evils—physical, mental and moral—of which the world is too full, this question, as there is no dearth of scientists and philosophers to point out, cannot unequivocally be answered in the affirmative without arbitrarily discounting facts about the world pointing to maladaptation, failure of purpose, purposelessness, and even the tyranny of non-human forces. Hence it is evident that the teleological argument only illustrates the vicious principle: wish is father to thought, which, in logical terminology, is but the fallacy of begging the question.

But no matter whether the manifestation of adaptations of means to ends in the world is subject to limitation or not, the very premise of the teleological argument consisting in the ascription of purposefulness to the world is vitiated by anthropomorphism—the standpoint according to which mankind, really a tiny speck in the immeasurable universe, is the centre of it. And this makes no secret of the fact that while the ontological argument ultimately proceeds—and so does the cosmological argument—from misconceived humility and lack of a true sense of human dignity, the teleological argument has its source in human conceit and an exaggerated sense of human dignity. In any case, the teleological argument, like the ontological and the cosmological arguments, has no ground to stand upon except ignorance about the self of man. As one of our earlier discoveries goes, the self has, strictly

speaking, no end or purpose to realize, and these concepts have meaning only in the life of man as held in the grip of Ignorance. So, even from the human standpoint of viewing the world, the ascription of purposefulness to it would really be an act of ignorance. And it would be still more so to ascribe, as the teleological argument does, to the Divine Self (Īsvara) that which, strictly speaking, is not ascribable to the human self (Jīva), viz., purposiveness. This indeed brings the teleological argument to ruin. But if even then, such a thing as the Deity must be admitted, that can be done only in the manner of Spinoza, in which case the word Deity may retain its emotional value, but would mean what it is really not intended to do, viz., the mere world of Nature.

As a result of the above examination of its capacity, our theoretical reason is found unable to hold out any prospect of our discovering a road to the kind of existence other than and different from our selves and the physical world, which could be called divine. But that does not mean that the selves and physical things, to which the common road of us all leads, are mere beings, bare existences—existences without an inner meaning. On the contrary, physical things, as scientific understanding reveals, are not a chaotic mass of matter, but are held in well-defined uniformities called the laws of Nature. Likewise, our selves, as shown by self-examination in the light of Practical Reason, have a capacity for the appreciation of worth and the feeling of obligation and, as such, are the veritable centre of a world of values. This twofold fact relating respectively to the laws of Nature and the values centring round human selves has, however, presented itself to many philosophers as a finger-post showing the road to the Deity. But, as we have already argued at length, to proceed on the acceptance of the fact in this light is to labour under a delusion.

The laws of Nature are but the ways of the behaviour of the physical world, so that the existence to which they can be said to point is naturally this world itself. To hold that they point to another kind of existence, viz., the Deity, would, however, be the same as to hold that they point away from the physical world, which would obviously amount to denying that they are what they are. Of course, it may be replied that they point to the Deity in a sense different from that in which they point to the physical world. But in that case the Deity, as that very difference would indicate, cannot, like the physical world, be

regarded as an existence as religious belief demands Him to be. If even this be not sufficient to convince philosophers that there is no road from the laws of Nature to the Deity, they cannot, in order to build that road, do anything better than to fall back upon the supposition that these laws are ultimately the ways of the operation of the Divine Mind. But this supposition, implying as it does that the process of the physical world is governed by purpose, is, as we have already seen, but a part of the unwarranted premise of the teleological argument. And, in ascribing the laws of Nature to the Divine Mind regarded as a reality, it assumes, arbitrarily and without question, the validity of the cosmological and the ontological arguments.

Now, the values are not existences. For them to be existences in any sense whatsoever is to lose their essential meaning and so to commit suicide. But that does not mean that they point to no existence. On the contrary, they are inseparable from the kind of existence called self just as the laws of Nature are from another kind of existence, viz., the physical world. Indeed, a world without self is a world devoid of value and valuation—and this for the simple reason that apart from the sense of value and its attendant feeling of obligation, value itself would be a word without a determinate meaning. But this should not be construed as conveying the doctrine of the subjectivity and relativity of the values. The values, not being existences themselves, cannot, on account of their inseparability from the selves, be said to be *dependent upon* the latter. The inseparability is, so to say, *logical* and, on no account, *actual*, so that the values are objective and not subjective, universal and not relative. In fact, the values limit, instead of being limited by, the self. And this brings us to the remarkable fact that the self's sense of value with its attendant feeling of obligation points to a characteristic peculiarity of its being, viz., its essentiality to others of its kind. Thus we have an account of the essential facts about the values which, as the philosopher should have the wisdom to realize, are such that hardly any of them is compatible with the admission of the Deity.

Since there should be nothing to limit the Deity in order that He may be worth the name, the values must be features of His very *existence*. And this is exactly what is meant by the prevailing conception of the Deity as the embodiment of the values, as a being in whom the values are finally and completely realized. But the values thus regarded, while conforming to the requirement that they must be inseparable

from the self, lose the meaning that is essential to them and are reduced to mere words. Also, being, in this case, *internally related* to the Deity, they are lacking in *objectivity*, so that they can be of no concern to human selves, granting, of course, that they may have some measure of independent reality despite the infinitude of the Deity. And this consequence inevitably leads to another which may leave the Deity unmoved, but would affect the human self most adversely. The values being of no concern to the human self, its sense of value and the feeling of obligation attendant thereupon, if capacity for these could still be ascribed to it, would be mere superfluities having no bearing upon its inner being. And that being so, it would be without the capacity for self-expression, for feeling itself as being essential to others of its kind, which would be tantamount to its negation. The situation, then, reduces itself to a crisis which allows us no freedom to accept both value and Deity and leaves us with no option but to choose between the two. But since to choose the Deity instead of Value would, for us, be not only to part with what is *of* us for the sake of what is *above* us, but to embrace self-annihilation, it is incumbent upon us to leave the Deity undisturbed in His majesty and to save our self by preserving our sense of value and our feeling of obligation.

But why, instead of going far afield in search of evidence for the justification of religious belief, should we not confine ourselves to the purest and the most genuine expression of our Practical Reason in our sense of duty and our feeling of moral obligation and try to build upon it the superstructure of religion? It is in this manner that Kant approached the problem of religion, and, as a result, found himself justified in admitting Immortality, and arrived at the well-known moral argument for the reality of God. Now, since we have already had occasion to examine this position of Kant, all that we have to say about it in this context is that judged in the light of the results of our previous examination of it,¹ it amounts to the declaration of the disjunctive (either—or) character of the relation between our sense of duty and our feeling of moral obligation on the one hand, and Immortality and God on the other, and to the demand, consequent thereupon, for our choice between the two. But since it is not feasible, nor can it be an act of wisdom, to choose the superstructure with its foundation left out, we have no option but to preserve the foundation, viz., our sense of

¹ *Vide ante*, pp. 251-3.

duty and our feeling of moral obligation even at the sacrifice of the idea of building anything upon it, although we are sure that the sacrifice is not in demand.

Thus our Practical Reason, neither by itself nor with outside aid, can point to anything that could serve as the safe and sound foundation for the religion of God. This is bound to be so, owing to the fact that the religion of God involves primarily, though not exclusively, the problem of *existence*—existence divine and superempirical, and that, as we have insisted time and again, it is not within the competence of our Practical Reason to deal with this problem in any shape or form. And as regards our Theoretical Reason, it is necessary to bear in mind that it is the faculty of knowledge *par excellence*, and its scope is co-extensive with the whole field of *existence*, and that that alone is, for it, an existence which is either an object of our experience or is transcendently presupposed by our experience of objects. Now, since God, admittedly, does not come under either of the two heads, Theoretical Reason can have no means of admitting Him as an existence; nor should we forget that it is not given to this faculty even to *think*, or to form an Idea (in the Kantian sense) of His existence. This is precisely the point to which our previous discussion of the cosmological, the ontological and the teleological arguments is directed. The religion of God or gods, be it added, however, is the offspring of man's idea of the world of matter and life as shrouded in mystery. But, as it has been increasingly evident in course of the evolution of civilization, the mystery need not lead to God or gods, spirit or spirits, benevolent or malevolent, but is only in need of being dispelled by science, physical and biological.

What follows then is not that religion is not a fact nor that it is not a genuine form of human experience, but that it is not simple God-consciousness nor a complex of thought and feeling and conduct based upon belief in the reality of the Supreme Being called God. This, in brief, is the negative result of our investigation of the nature of religion, which only prepares the ground for a proper enquiry into the fact that remains—the fact of man's religious experience.

THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION

THE object of the enquiry in question should naturally be not merely to ascertain the new religion that there may be to rival the religion of old—the religion of God, but to vindicate the former, or, in other words, to show that it is religion *par excellence*, which, it should be borne in mind, it is demanded of philosophy to do, but which is no part of the business of religion as such. It seems, however, that in the performance of this special task, philosophy of religion has to show that there is a problem, and a genuine one, which falls outside the scope of the accredited enquiries of the human mind—of course, the so-called religious enquiry excepted, because its case is under examination—and the satisfactory solution of which is to be found in a fresh outlook on life—an outlook which, while not conflicting with the results of these enquiries, is not provided by them singly or collectively. The question of *problem* should on no account be regarded as unimportant in the field of philosophy of religion. On the contrary, its importance in this field should be specially emphasized in view of the fact that the weakness and vulnerability of the religion of God is due to the absence of any problem worth the name to which it could be said to offer a solution. Of course, it may be replied that this religion conveys the solution of the problems that are envisaged in the various traditional arguments for the reality of God. But the fact is that none of these problems can be said to be genuine in as much as the arguments, as we have already seen, are either vitiated by the fallacy of begging the question or are, otherwise, abortive and even suicidal.

What, then, is the problem characterized above, the solution of which may constitute the new religion we are in search of? As we have, in this matter, no option but to stand outside the ambit of the religion of old, we must, in order to ascertain the problem in question, confine our attention to the unvarnished and unostentatious world of us all—the world of selves and Nature. Now, selves, as already seen, are the

centre of value and valuation, and Nature obviously is the realm of facts as held in inexorable laws. But, since value is not fact nor fact is value, and since valuation is unconcerned with the inexorability of law, and the operation of law is regardless of, and recalcitrant to, valuation, the world of selves and Nature is anything but a harmonious whole which the idea of divine purpose demands it to be. This would not, however, have mattered had it not been a fact that man is not a mere self, but a person, that is, self as held in a peculiarly private and intimate relationship with a biological organism which is but a part of Nature. Being, in this curious and inexplicable manner, the meeting-point of two diverse worlds, the world of value and the world of fact, man easily and naturally, though not necessarily, fails to discriminate his self from the not-self and is thus, as we have observed earlier, held in the grip of Ignorance (*Avidyā*). In consequence, he is aware of himself as an ego, which is self as curbed by the world of fact and cabined in a part of it, that is, self in bondage, self 'lost' to itself, but which 'saves' its 'life' or, in other words, survives with uncontrollable desire (*vāsanā*) and insatiable craving (*trṣṇā*). But desire uncontrolled and craving knowing no satisfaction are precisely those forces within man which attract to themselves the many and various non-human forces from without and, together with the latter, undermine man's sense of value and feeling of obligation, with the result that he is left without the sense of his essential dignity and stands degraded.

It would not, however, do to object that human degradation, born of man's Ignorance as it is said to be, should, even if it be a fact, remain for ever hidden in the darkness of its origin, without coming to his notice and without being of any concern to him. For man everywhere and always, whether in an age of plentiful supply of the necessities of life and comforts or in that of scarcity and privation, suffers from anger, fear, jealousy, hatred, envy, in fact, from all the passions to which he is made heir by 'flesh and blood'. That these passions are evil and vile, and that they produce distressing effects upon man cannot be denied by anyone except those who really do not count—those who either have lost, or are yet to attain, manhood, and those with whom life is of little significance or does not matter at all. Thus human degradation, being a fact beyond dispute and a source of distress to man and his race, is primarily the subject of a *problem*, which obviously is no other than the serious and

urgent practical problem of its remedy and the liberation of man consequent thereupon.

Now, the physical sciences should naturally be unconscious of the fact of human degradation and the problem arising out of it, the problem of man's liberation, because neither the fact nor the problem relates merely to the physical world with which they deal, and because both relate to man's place in this world with which they, really, are unconcerned. Psychology, notwithstanding the fact that it deals with man in his relation to his environment—physical and otherwise—is equally unconscious of the fact and the problem in question, because its treatment of man is naturally confined within the limitations of its conception of man as a mere ego or a self in bondage. It is, however, far from us to minimize the importance of psychiatry. But as a branch of applied psychology it is obviously subject to the limitations of the science of which it is an application, so that it remains, after all, a stranger to the fact of the universal degradation of man and the practical problem consequent thereupon. The claim of Ethics to deal with this problem is perhaps hardest to set aside. But our position is so peculiar that we have no option but to do that. Since the concepts of 'good' and 'end' are the limit of the reach of Ethics, and since these concepts, as we have previously observed, have no meaning except in relation to human life as held in the grip of Ignorance, the problem of liberation obviously falls outside the scope of Ethics.

Nevertheless, the problem of liberation, as we should have no reason to doubt, is genuine. And since religion, however be it conceived of, must have the consideration of the life of man and the problems relating to it at its centre, this problem is unavoidably religious. This, however, brings us back to the question whether the religion of God, which answers to the prevailing conception of religion, is fitted to solve this problem. If the reply must be in the affirmative, then all that we have so far said about this religion would be meaningless, and its position would stand vindicated; for the test of religion, after all, lies in its ability to solve the problem of man's life. But the situation is not likely to take this turn, for the following reason. According to the religion of God, human degradation implies a mere *fact*, the fact of the imperfection of man, and this fact primarily calls for belief in an all-perfect being, viz., God. Thus, this religion, far from bringing the problem in question into prominence, does not seem even to recognize its import-

ance. If, however, it is called upon to solve the problem, the solution it may have to offer cannot be expressed except in terms of the relation of man to God. Now, in his relation to God, man should be either a part of, if not identical with, God or dependent upon Him. In the former case, remedy for man's degradation is, of course, assured, but at the heaviest sacrifice to him, the sacrifice of himself: his liberation, a tribute to the glory and majesty of God, is his own annihilation. In the latter, the gloom hanging over man's degradation will be only delusively lifted out of his vision by his sense of dependence upon God; but since the dependence of an inferior being upon a superior one is but the enslavement of the former to the latter, his degradation will be aggravated instead of being alleviated.

The point brought out above is, however, of profound significance which plainly lies in this, that human degradation cannot be ended, nor is liberation to be granted to man, by a higher Power, supposed or actual, upon which he may be said to be dependent, be the Power sacred and divine as religion ordinarily conceives it to be or secular and mundane, say, the State. As regards the State in particular, it is necessary to observe that regarded as omnipotent, with absolute control over all human affairs without exception, it can hold out to man no better prospect than that of his enslavement and degradation of an unimaginable and unsurpassable magnitude; for it rules out even the delusion of liberation which an omnipotent God may be so kind as to allow him to entertain. But, then, this can be no argument for going to the other extreme and holding that human degradation can come to an end, and liberation can come within the reach of man by chance or as a matter of natural course or as a result of a predetermined arrangement of circumstances. Had this been so, liberation would not have been a *problem* to man, as it undoubtedly is. From the nature of the case, liberation is a responsibility devolving upon man himself, which demands his observance of a certain discipline, but discipline, obviously, not arbitrarily fixed nor externally determined, but presupposing, and deriving its meaning from, a purely human outlook on life. And it is such an outlook that constitutes the essence of the new religion we are in search of, and makes no secret of the fact that this religion is but the modest and this-worldly religion of man as distinguished from the ostentatious and other-worldly religion of God.

We should not, however, lose sight of the fact that an outlook on

life merely detached from the religion of God and professing to be entirely based upon the consideration of man and the problems of his life would not be strictly human nor have the sense of religion and, indeed, would be of no real value to him, if it misses the truth that human degradation is ultimately due to man's false appearance to himself as an ego, and if it is not alive to the necessity of the elimination of his ego-consciousness. At the same time it is far from us to ignore the truth which has from time to time revealed itself to men of penetrating insight, and has been brought to the forefront of social philosophy since the time of Karl Marx, and, in fact, is of fundamental importance in Marxist philosophy—the truth, namely, that man's degradation and his suffering consequent thereupon are due to the unhelpful and inequitable character of some of the aspects, especially the economic aspect, of the hitherto prevailing social order. But by accepting this truth as sufficient by itself and final in the matter concerned, Marxist philosophy, we are afraid, leaves out of account the root-cause of human degradation and suffering, and, in fact, fails to realize that the effects in question and the cause to which it attributes them are only co-effects of a more ultimate cause.

Strictly speaking, society in none of its aspects and at no stage of its development is a mere external stimulus for man to respond to inevitably and helplessly, but is itself, at least in part, if not wholly, a human product. And however much indebted man may be to the prevailing social order for what he is, there is no getting away from the fact that the foibles as well as the strong points of his character determine the nature of the latter. That being so, it is idle to think, as the majority of social philosophers including the Marxists do, that the problem of man's degradation and suffering can be finally solved by means of a mere change of the social order that be. Indeed, any attempt to solve the problem in this manner would not only defeat its purpose but be a way of escape from the problem itself. Since life itself is dynamic, the form, structure and institutions of society, as manifestations of human life, are, of course, subject to a process of evolution. But so long as human thought and behaviour continue to be governed by ego-consciousness, social evolution in any of its aspects can only be a natural but non-human process, regardless of the demand of the religion of man. So, in order that this demand may be fulfilled, the prevailing social order should undergo a process aiming at the elimina-

tion of the ego-consciousness of man. And this, of course, points to the necessity of man's observance of a principle of conduct with diligence and faithfulness—the principle which is foreign to the scope of the natural process of social evolution, but which, as we have seen earlier, is revealed by his Practical Reason in and through its Ideas, the Idea of self as the bearer of the 'cross' of disvalue and the Idea of 'no self'.

As seen above, the elimination of ego-consciousness is a genuine religious demand. And, being a process of negation as it obviously is, it serves to indicate that religion as such cannot rest upon man's false appearance of himself as an ego. Judged in this light, what ordinarily passes for religion is hardly worth the name, because much of it is atrociously ego-centric. Prayer, worship and rites calculated to fulfil the demand of religion are more often than not but means of preserving the desires and cravings of 'flesh and blood' undiminished. And, not to speak of the many gods of polytheism, even the one God of monotheism is, after all, an image, though infinitely refined and magnificent, of the false appearance of man as an ego. All this, however, goes to show that the religion which psychologists like Freud have in view is what that term does not really mean, so that men of religion may have welcome relief from the distressing result of these psychologists' analysis of religious experience.

Strictly speaking, psychology of religion as well as social philosophy, as shown by their prevailing tendency, are too much concerned with facts about human life and too little interested in its meaning, with the result that the religious demand for the elimination of ego-consciousness naturally escapes their notice. But, then, the consideration of this demand would obviously defeat its purpose if it leads to a disregard or distortion of the facts about, or of the meaning of, human life. And it is precisely this that is bound to happen when the idea of the elimination of ego-consciousness is worked out in a purely ascetic spirit, no matter whether it is so done by philosophers or mere mystics. To the ascetic temperament this idea, conveying the sense of a process of negation as it does, is naturally dear. So, a philosopher with such temperament, not to speak of the mystic who is prone to asceticism, cannot avoid construing the elimination of ego-consciousness as a process of pure negation, negation with no affirmative implication whatsoever, so that to him all facts about human life are mere vanities and human life itself is void of meaning.

It is, however, far from us to ignore the importance of the tendency towards negation referred to above. On the contrary, it is up to us to recognize that this tendency is apt to satisfy itself progressively from a lower to a higher stage until it finds final rest in absolute negation. Further, we should not be so lacking in insight as not to realize that the achievements of the tendency do, in varying degrees, make for the silence and the loneliness of the human self and so are, no matter whether or not they are intended to be, preparations for the inevitable destiny of human life, Death the Great Silence and the Absolute Loneliness. Thus they seem to be of use in *overcoming* the fear of death, while the fact remains that many a traditional religion suggests only a way of cowardly *escape* from that fear by creating the fiction of human immortality. But, then, indifference to the problem of life, from which the tendency in question is inseparable, is a sure sign of death in life, which means that there should be no fear of death nor any attempt to overcome this fear. It seems, however, that all fears including the fear of death, which should be overcome for the simple reason that they are bad, are to be overcome not by fairy tales nor by pure self-abnegation but by courage, and that the courage in demand has no source to spring from except earnestness about, and serious application to, the problem of life. Strictly speaking, death has no separate problem to set to anyone who is steadfast in his faith in life. This is precisely the reason why the elimination of ego-consciousness, which is a genuine religious demand, is unconcerned with the tendency towards negation which culminates in the denial of everything. Of course, religion goes ill with ego-consciousness. But with life and everything else ignored, religion would be a vacuum that could never be filled. This fatal danger cannot, however, befall religion except in so far as it loses its moorings through the ignorance of the positive implication of the elimination of ego-consciousness.

In the light of the above discussion, the scope of our enquiry about religion comes to be clearly defined and reduced to a definite question, the question as to the positive implication of the demand for the elimination of ego-consciousness. And as regards this question, we can easily realize that it is free from controversy and admits of a clear and simple answer, if we just remember what we have seen above, viz., that the ego is but the negation of the self as such. The elimination of ego-consciousness, as we have observed time and again, is, of course,

a process of negation. But since that which is negated by it is itself a negation, it is, by necessary implication, a process of affirmation—affirmation of *that* of which the negation is negated, viz., the self. Thus is the question before us answered, and the answer really means this, that religion is the remedy for the dehumanization of man into the non-human ego, and the way of his rehumanization, of his restoration to the human self that he is, as it were, in the manner of his 'conversion', regeneration or 'rebirth'. Born biologically as he is, man is naturally a bundle of passions, desires and cravings, and so a non-human ego not far removed from the world of the sub-human species of animals. And so long as the accident of his biological birth holds absolute sway over him, he remains a stranger to what is strictly human in him and in others of his kind and, in particular, has a world to live in, where value, far from having any advantage over disvalue, is obscured by the latter. In order that he may extricate himself from such a situation as he, to be true to himself, should do, his old world should, therefore, yield place to a new one where value is to triumph over disvalue. The fulfilment of this requirement demands of him the conduct of his life in accordance with the principle conveyed by the bearing of the 'cross' of disvalue—precisely the conduct which would bring about his new birth, his initiation into the order of the religion of man.

Reborn into the new world and initiated into the new order of religion, man is a self characteristically human. But the question, in fact, the fundamental question of religion is: What is a human self? It cannot be of the nature of a 'windowless' monad or a 'solitary' (kevala) purusa (individual soul),¹ because either is an illusorily self-sufficient and self-subsistent entity like the ego which is the *negation of the self*. It cannot also be conceived of as a part of, or identical with, the Supreme Self called God, because, thus conceived, it is divine and, therefore, *non-human*. And it would be still more unwarrantable to carry the process of elevating its status to an extreme with reference to the view that the deeper significance of its existence is realized in its absorption into the Absolute, whether secularly conceived to be the totalitarian state or mystically intuited to be the 'One without a second' (advaya). For, in that case, it would be *neither human nor a self*. The point, however, is that mystery surrounds these conceptions of the

¹ This refers to the School of Indian Philosophy known as Sāṃkhya which, like Leibniz, conceives of the human self as insular or solitary.

human self, and that they have little bearing upon man's earthly existence and, perhaps, can have no sense except as ways of positing him in the world to come. And this suffices to show that if religious importance be attached to them, religion itself would be an other-worldly affair having nothing to do with man's life on earth and hence a failure and a subterfuge.

The idea of the rebirth of man, on the contrary, has no mystery about it. It means his admission into the world of value triumphant over disvalue, which, of course, is, in a sense, new to him, but obviously not unearthly. But then, his admission into this world, in order that it may be of significance to him, should result in a kind of *spiritual* awakening on his part. And this may be construed as pointing to a mystery or an unearthly phenomenon. This difficulty is, however, not real but imaginary in as much as the awakening in question is spiritual not in any recondite sense but in one which is easily recognizable, that to which he has to awaken being obviously his sense of value and his feeling of obligation attendant thereupon, which are but manifestations of his Practical Reason. Thus, the idea of the rebirth of man really points to the need of the exercise of the authority of his Practical Reason over his life. And this, together with the results of our earlier investigation into the significance of Practical Reason, is a clear indication of the fact that the nature of the human self cannot be understood except in the light of Practical Reason, and, consequently, that religion which, strictly speaking, should have the human self as its centre as well as its circumference, cannot but be confined within the bounds of Practical Reason.

Now, the human self understood in the light of Practical Reason should obviously be of such a nature as conforms to the demand of, and is indicated by, man's sense of value and especially by his feeling of obligation which is attendant upon it, and apart from which it is of no consequence to him. This, of course, brings in a problem, but one that we have attempted to solve in the last section of the foregoing essay. As shown there, man's feeling of obligation born of his sense of value indicates, as nothing else can do, the inner nature of his being; and in the light of this indication he is *essential* to his fellow-men, and, in isolation from them, would be an unmeaning abstraction. It is in virtue of this peculiarity of his being that he is human and a self, as distinguished from the 'windowless' monad or the *kevala purusa*

which is not a self, but of the nature of the ego, or the man-in-God or God-in-man who is, after all, divine, not human, or the individual (jivātman) as merged in the Absolute, which is neither human nor a self. The human self being thus essential to others of its kind, any attempt to ascribe a quality to it would obviously be involved in self-contradiction. Regarded as characterized by any quality whatsoever, it would be an entity, a *thing* or, let us rather say, an ego which, at its best, is such that its being essential to anything else is out of the question, and, at its worst, is the negation of the self.

There is likely to be no exception to the above situation even if the quality in question be *freedom*, no matter how it is interpreted and its importance in ordinary human affairs estimated. Even granted that freedom of the human self is an inevitable demand of morality, there remains the fact on which we have insisted earlier, viz., that morality in its usual sense—in the sense in which it is said to make this demand—concerns man's empirical life and offers general guidance as to how he can live best, while being in bondage, and, consequently, that it can provide no information about what the human self in itself is. Moreover, if such a thing as religion is to be admitted—and there seems to be no reason why this should not be done—in addition to, or over and above, morality, then the position of the doctrine of human freedom becomes precarious in as much as it does not, as theologians are sometimes painfully aware, go well with religion even in its ordinary sense, viz., as the religion of God. But all this apart, moral obligation in its strict sense, as we have seen above,¹ is too sufficient unto itself to invite the question of its including *freedom* or even excluding *necessity*.

The case of *immortality* regarded as a quality of the human self is, however, far worse. The concept of immortality is obviously super-empirical, so that it cannot have even that importance in ordinary human affairs which the concept of freedom—being, as we have previously observed,² empirical—may be said to have. And if freedom, strictly speaking, is not a moral demand, far less can immortality be the same; because, unlike freedom, immortality cannot, even in the view of Kant who yielded to none in his insistence on the moral importance of immortality, be deduced merely from what is strictly moral, viz., moral obligation; and because while freedom is only not called for by moral obligation, immortality is apt to stand in the way of the discharge

¹ *Vide ante*, pp. 252-3.

² *Vide ante*, pp. 252-3.

of moral obligation, nay, bears a disjunctive relation to it.¹ It seems, therefore, that the demand for immortality cannot come from anywhere else than religion, and that the religion in question, which is obviously the religion of God, is at variance with morality. And this, on the one hand, detracts from the merit of the religion of God and, on the other, brings out the absurdity of immortality. The main point, however, is that the desire for immortality as well as the desire for freedom are subservient to the interest of the ego as an ego, and that whereas the latter is only another name for aiming at the preservation of egoity untarnished, the former is the embodiment of the most irrational of all human cravings, the craving for indefinite prolongation of egoity. Thus immortality excels freedom in its failure to provide information about what the human self in itself is.

The nature of the human self being ascertained both positively and negatively as above, the religion of man should naturally be said to have nothing to rest upon, or be concerned with except human selves regarded as essential to one another. That man as an ego is without religion, and bears the surest witness to its negation, and that religion demands the elimination of his ego-consciousness may be recognized more or less easily. But it is seldom realized that the positive requirement of religion—in order that it may, as it should, affect man immediately and vitally—cannot be anything unearthly or, in any sense, foreign to his nature or falling outside of him. The failure to realize this truth pervades the prevalent conceptions of religion, and its typical illustrations are to be found in the attempts to make out a case for religion with the aid of such concepts as the *kevala purusa*, the Supreme Self or God, the indeterminate and undifferentiated Absolute and freedom and immortality of the human self. The real point, however, is that these attempts are but ways of escape from religion in as much as they, as has been made sufficiently clear in course of the foregoing discussions, are not only not conscious of the positive implication of the elimination of ego-consciousness but are based tacitly or overtly, immediately or remotely—as the case may be—on the admission of the ego as a reality.

The idea of the essentiality of the human self to others of its kind is, however, in a class apart from those mentioned above. Unless man's sense of value and his feeling of obligation, together with all that they

¹ *Vide ante*, p. 252; also pp. 295-6.

obviously imply, be arbitrarily ignored—which should not, however, be done lest man himself and the problem of his life should be left out of consideration—this concept cannot but be regarded as the revelation of the inner essence of human existence. And since nothing about man, regarded as human in distinction from whatever is non-human, can be more earthly than his sense of value and his feeling of obligation attendant thereupon, the essentiality of human selves to one another as revealed by them can have nothing unearthly about it. But all this apart, as the foregoing discussion indicates, the negation of the ego and, in particular, the positive implication of the elimination of ego-consciousness upon which religion has to rest are embodied in the human self regarded as essential to others of its kind.

III

RELIGION—THE GREAT EVENT IN HUMAN LIFE

RELIGION, then, relates to what man essentially is, so that, though this is ordinarily left out of consideration, it involves no question of his *becoming* anything that he already is not. What is meant is not that religion should deny the importance of the development of man—whether biological, psychological, social, political or spiritual—but that no manner of development that man may undergo is of any real significance to him except in so far as, alongside of it, he remains established in the state of his essentiality to his fellow-men. Nevertheless, there is no gainsaying the fact that, in consequence of his biological birth, man's essential nature is hidden from him in the darkness of Ignorance, so that he is, as it were, alienated from himself, is not his self. It is on this account that religion is a *problem*—not, however, the problem of his becoming anything that he already is not—but that of his return to his self, the problem of liberation or rebirth—liberation *in*, not *from*, earthly life, rebirth in the sense of regeneration within life as opposed to death and, in particular, to birth after death, the idea of which, coupled with that of Transmigration, finds a prominent place in philosophical and religious thought, especially in India, but which is really the goal of an irrational human craving born of the ego-consciousness of man.

Involving this problem as it does, and especially providing its solution as it should do in order that it may be worth the name, religion must be an event, indeed, the Great Event in the life of man—event not in the physical or spatio-temporal but in the spiritual sense, viz., as Conversion or rather Enlightenment (Bodha).¹ Religion as the enlightenment of man has, however, no mystery and nothing unearthly

¹ It is significant that Buddha (the Enlightened), the title of the founder of Buddhism, is derived from the Sanskrit word 'bodha' (enlightenment).

about it. It has a base and an apex, both most intelligibly human, the former being human conduct conforming to the principle signified by the bearing of the 'cross' of disvalue, and the latter, man's feeling of himself as being essential to his fellow-men. Man who is, in a deeper analysis, a human self, a self that *is* essential to others of its kind, is, in religious enlightenment, aroused to the *feeling* of himself as being so, which is the culmination of his sense of value and his feeling of obligation. This feeling, let us not fail to realize, is in a class apart from the passing events in the mental life of man, whether exhilarating or depressing, welcome or unwelcome. It is not even love as opposed to hate, sympathy as opposed to antipathy, friendliness as opposed to hostility; it is as above the former in such pairs of opposites as it is away from the latter. It is, of course, usual with religion to attach paramount importance to, and to insist on the cultivation of, love, charity, fraternity, in fact, of all the sentiments that are ordinarily regarded as noble. But to do so is obviously to presuppose the want of man's feeling of himself as being essential to his fellow-men, and, therefore, of the basis of religion, so that it is as unavailing as putting the cart before the horse. The fact is that the noble sentiments cannot arise merely at one's command or of themselves, but proceed from the apex of the Great Event in human life which consists in man's feeling of himself as being essential to his fellow-men. This feeling, as we have already observed, constitutes the joy of living as opposed to all that happens to life as affection of human passions. And this warrants the truth that all that is good and wholesome in the world of human affairs owes its origin to the joy of living (*ānandam*), and that without the latter the little world of man is a gigantic vortex of misery and suffering.

But then, the joy of living can no more be a spontaneous growth or a fortuitous happening or externally determined than the noble sentiments. On the contrary, in view of the fact that human life is naturally assailed by Ignorance—the fact on account of which man is ordinarily fallen off the state of his essentiality to his fellow-men—it must be a human responsibility, human both individually and socially, but, for obvious reasons, primarily in the former manner. And this refers to the base of the Great Event in human life, viz., individual conduct conforming to the principle signified by the bearing of the 'cross' of disvalue which is the final means of the elimination of ego-consciousness. Religion, as an attempt to solve the problem of liberation, then, is, if

we may say so, the great lesson in self-confidence and self-determination. And as an accomplished fact, it is not a vicarious acquisition nor the result of any act of grace performed by a higher Power. Thus it is *private*, but obviously not so in the sense that it holds the religious aspirant in isolation from his fellow-men, because that would be its ruin. This, incidentally, serves to resolve, as the students of Buddhism may realize, the supposed conflict between the early Buddhist ideal of *Arhatship* and the later Buddhist ideal of *Bodhisattvahood*.¹ However that may be, if isolationism is ruinous to religion, it is privacy that lends holiness to it and keeps it intact by preventing its degeneration into rival creeds or conflicting sets of dogmas which are wont to create a situation most unfavourable to man's arousal to the feeling of himself as being essential to his fellow-men.

Indeed, without privacy, religion would—and, in fact, invariably does—meet with its worst fate in extinction in the shape of its translation into a body of formalities, rituals and ceremonials misconceived as sacred. Hence the profound significance of the idea of the 'actionlessness' (*naiskarmya*) of religion. Even prayer and worship and meditation, private and silent, emphasized by devotional religion (the *Bhakti* cult)—granting that they are unconcerned with the desires and cravings of the ego²—are perhaps in the same category as the co-called religious rites and ceremonies, and, as acts, seem to be foreign to religion understood in the sense of man's feeling of his essentiality to his fellow-men, because this feeling must be an accomplished *fact* and not an *act* or acts prescribed. Strictly speaking, religion as the apex of the Great Event in human life is not only not action but also not *knowledge* nor even *value*, because neither seems to be of the nature of *fact* any more than *action*. This will perhaps be assented to by those who are earnest about religion. But it is by no means a plea for the denial of the importance of knowledge, value and action for religion.

As already seen, except on account of the transcendental implication of *knowledge*, the self, for us, would be a meaningless word and not an *existence*, and without the self regarded as an existence religion would be a vacuum for ever empty and have nothing whatsoever to rest upon.

¹ I have deliberately refrained from using the derogatory title *Hinayāna* (Low Way), which later Buddhism self-styled as *Mahāyāna* (Great Way) conferred upon early Buddhism on the erroneous understanding that the ideal of *Arhatship* is individual and selfish.

² *Vide ante*, p. 302.

But then, as we have argued above, the self which religion should have as its content and support cannot be a windowless monad or a part of divine existence or identical with the Absolute, because conceived in any of these manners, it is but the negation of itself. Hence the question of the importance of *value* for religion. In virtue of his feeling of obligation attendant upon his sense of value, man is not a bare existence or a mere being which is as good as nothing, but is essential to his fellow-men, so that, instead of having to lose his self in bare existence, he finds it in them, and they, likewise, find theirs in him and in one another. Thus the self posits itself, and, what is more, the selves in their essentiality to one another are sufficient unto themselves. And this lends meaning to, and at the same time is a vindication of, the religion of man.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that religion is, in a sense, a *problem*, indeed, the fundamental problem of human life concerning man's liberation as dependent upon the elimination of his ego-consciousness, and that religion as an accomplished fact cannot but be the embodiment of the solution of this problem. And it is precisely on this account that religion is a call for *action*, but action calculated to be the means of the elimination of ego-consciousness, and, therefore, conforming to the principle of conduct conveyed by the bearing of the 'cross' of disvalue. This, however, brings to light a point of profound significance about the bearing of religion upon human conduct. Since, as observed earlier, no human conduct is worth the name except in so far as it conforms, directly or remotely, in some measure or other, to this very principle, all human conduct should, strictly speaking, be of a religious character. And while religious actions may vary in the degree of their religious merit, it cannot be that within the field of human conduct only some actions should be religious and others not. This is bound to be so when religion is the religion of man, as, from our standpoint, it must be. Whether prayer, worship and meditation, which are generally regarded as of paramount religious importance, are really so is, of course, an awkward question to discuss. But our position is such that we cannot help entertaining the view that, if they are not ways of escape from the serious responsibility that devolves upon man as a human self and as a religious aspirant, they certainly bespeak a sort of religious lethargy and are, indeed, easy and convenient substitutes for the strenuous and selfless actions called for by religion. However that

may be, the idea of the 'actionlessness' of religion does not obviously bear even the remotest suggestion of a religion of inaction, but only relates to the apex of what we have called the Great Event in human life as distinguished from its base. And this consideration, together with what we have already observed about the importance of knowledge and value for religion, will perhaps set at rest the unnecessary controversy which the rival schools of religious thought, especially in India, have set on foot by laying undue emphasis on the religious importance of *knowledge* (jñāna), *devotion* (bhakti) and *action* (karma) respectively.

Now, since religion is inseparable from action, and since action by its very nature is external or, let us rather say, visible, there is no getting away from the fact that religion has a *visible* aspect. Indeed, religion without its visibility, without its expression in appropriate actions, is, at its worst, its own ruin, and, at its best, is such that he who professes it surrenders himself to religious lethargy and yet, curiously enough, is likely to be misled into the feeling of a sort of spiritual pride and the sense of his superiority to the common herd. Nevertheless, religion that is unavoidably visible need not be so at the cost of its invisibility or privacy, because religious actions, conforming as they should do to the principle of conduct signified by the bearing of the 'cross' of dis-value, are only ancillary to man's feeling of himself as being essential to his fellow-men, to his entrance into the lives of others, to his self-expression. And this is of profound significance to religion, the significance lying in the fact that the conflict between its visibility and its invisibility, between its commonness and its privacy is not real but only apparent, and, therefore, of no consequence whatsoever. It must, however, be due to the Ignorance that prevails among mankind that the conflict in question generally presents itself to men of religion as real, nay, as irresolvable. In consequence, some, indeed an infinitesimal number, of them are misled into the path of renunciation as shown by the religion of inaction, and follow it obstinately and tenaciously, while the vast majority, by an act of sheer self-deception, accept a religion with its invisibility completely ruled out, a religion that is all husk and no kernel. The case of the former obviously evokes our feeling of pity, not that of resentment—pity on their account, because they are lost to themselves, but pity also on account of the little world of human beings, because they are lost to it, and it is poorer without them. But

the case of the latter cannot be disposed of by a mere expression of pity or resentment. On the contrary, it deserves serious consideration in view of the fact that it is they who really count in the world of human beings, and, consequently, that the shape of things in this world is mainly determined by their thoughts, beliefs, sentiments and actions.

RELIGION IN TRAVAIL

RELIGION without its invisibility, though really lifeless, may, and in fact usually does, survive with belief in God. But, while God Himself may be invisible, the religion of God as a religion is not likely to be so. On the contrary, in virtue of a process, natural but subtle and complicated, it assumes visibility to an extent that far exceeds the limits of rituals and ceremonials. Thus, in order that God may not fail to attract our notice on account of His invisibility, He is believed to be incarnated in mythical forms, whether human or non-human, ordinary or odd,¹ or to be represented by a living human being of His own choice, supposed to be miraculously born and called, in relation to Him, the Son, and, in relation to mankind, the Messiah. And in order that His will may not, on the same account, remain unknown, there must be, as Judaism believes, a few persons called prophets or, as Mohammedanism believes, only one person, Mohammed himself, called the Prophet, specially fitted to communicate it to the rest of the human race. But, apart from the question whether there is a God or not, man is in need of the knowledge of truths eternal not only for its own sake but for the sake of the guidance that it offers to right conduct, so that, as Hinduism believes, there must be, for men's acceptance, a body of such truths actually revealed or rather 'heard' (Sruti),² irrespective of when and how they were heard or who heard them.

Now, however important for creative art may it, despite its crudity, be, the Hindu doctrine of Avatāra, on account of its being obviously a product of the free play of imagination, excels the belief in God the Son and the Messiah or in prophets or the Prophet in detracting from the seriousness that naturally characterizes religion. And the Hindu belief in eternal truths actually revealed once for all makes for bigotry,

¹ This refers to the popular Hindu doctrine of Avatāra (Incarnation).

² The Sanskrit word 'Sruti' literally means 'that which is heard' and is the general name of authoritative Hindu Scriptures, including the Vedas and the Upanishads.

which is the worst enemy of religion, though in this respect it is surpassed by the Judaic-Mohammedan belief in the prophetic revelation of the will of God. But this element of Hinduism, considered in the light of what we have observed about it above, points to an essential feature of religion which is lost to most of the living religions of the world, viz., that religion is not, nor should the religion of man be, a racial phenomenon nor even an event in human history, but is essential to mankind and coeval with man, and that it has no prophet to recognize, no founder to depend upon, but is, as the religion of man should be, the most vital and yet the most personal concern of each and every man. And this indicates the primary condition that religion must fulfil in order that it may maintain its catholicity and wholeness without the danger of being divided into rival sects; remain tolerant without being seized with spiritual pride; preserve its vitality without giving itself up to preaching, religious propagation and proselytizing; and may, above all, hold human beings together by the strongest of all ties, the tie of common suffering and the feeling of themselves as being essential to one another.

The process of the transmutation of religion into visible forms is, however, such that once it is under way it ends in driving the idea of the invisibility of religion out of the field and thereby proves of disastrous consequence to mankind; or, if this idea somehow comes to bear upon it, it finally produces a curious result—curious because, while being allied with the religion of God, the religion which typifies all purely visible religions, it is not of this religion and yet, quite naturally, conveys no suggestion of the religion which is conspicuous for its invisibility. Rituals and ceremonials, edifices regarded as abodes of God or dedicated to His service, priests with the feeling of their superiority to the common herd and with the privilege to exercise their influence and authority—as it were, by the magic of the craft that is peculiar to them—over the laity; these, of course, are some of the obvious results of this process in both cases and are indeed common to all religions of God. But in the latter case, the process naturally deviates from its appointed direction at a certain stage, and culminates—as it has done in the case of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism,¹ in fact, in

¹ Buddhism and Jainism, exceptions, essentially, to the religion of God, failed to maintain this exceptional character untarnished in an atmosphere suffused with Hindu belief in God or gods. But this apart, their acceptance of the doctrine of Karma and

use of all schools of philosophico-religious thought in India with exception of the materialists such as the Cārvākas—in belief in an allied with Transmigration and Rebirth.

The doctrine of Karma and Transmigration and Rebirth is, in brief, as follows. Actions performed by human beings, besides producing immediate visible results, leave behind certain potencies which—in themselves invisible or, to use the more appropriate word, 'unseen' (*ta*)—serve as the causal principle in shaping men's character and determining the future course of their actions. But then, with a view to the operation, the effectiveness of these potencies should be exhausted sooner or later, so that if this life is too short for the fulfilment of the purpose, which is more likely than not, there must be a rebirth or a succession of rebirths, a life after death or a series of such lives, as the case may demand—the nature and quality of the rebirth or of the life after death, of course, depending upon those of the potencies concerned. The doctrine is thus a way of postulating immortality, but one in which is evidently different from, if not more plausible than, the immortality on which philosophers like Kant have done the same. But this, it has a merit which is lacking in the non-Hindu belief in immortality. According to the latter, all men are alike immortal and have the same lives of one and the same kind, which view obviously implies the absurd position that man's character and conduct in this life have no determining influence upon his future life. It is precisely this deficiency that Hinduism seeks to avoid by means of the view that immortality, while being common to all men, has, in the case of each man, a distinct shape and a peculiar quality as determined by Transmigration and Rebirth—a shape and a quality which cannot, however, in the nature of the case, remain fixed, but must change with the changes of these two determining factors.

One should not, however, commit the mistake of construing this doctrine as Necessitarianism. In fact, it falls as far apart from Necessitarianism as it does from its opposite, Libertarianism, the traditional doctrine of free-will. Since, according to it, human conduct is determined, it is, of course, opposed to Libertarianism. And by holding that the determining factors are nothing *extraneous* to man, but only

Transmigration and Rebirth is not unnatural, because this doctrine neither inevitably nor exclusively belongs to the religion of God. This explains why Buddha, while being alien to the religion of God, found himself in a position to advocate this doctrine.

the potencies left behind by his own actions, it keeps itself free of Necessitarianism and is, indeed, a form of self-determinism. The charge of fatalism, to which it seems to be open at first sight, cannot, however, be seriously levelled against it except in so far as it is ignored that, far from liquidating the problem of liberation, it brings the theory of self-determination to bear upon its solution. According to the doctrine of Karma, man has no escape from the effects of those action-potencies that are in the process of fructifying (*prārabdha*), but can, through the observance of a certain course of discipline, overcome those that are accumulated (*sanchita*) but have not started producing effects, and thereby entitle himself to liberation. This obviously is not fatalism, but only the recognition of the truth that liberation is a human responsibility, of course, within the limits set by the action-potencies already in the process of fructifying.

But, despite all its merits, the doctrine of Karma and Transmigration and Rebirth is, after all, a way of postulating immortality, and, what is more, it does not rest content with the idea of the applicability of immortality to all men, but holds that each man is immortal in his own individual way. Whether, in view of the latter point in particular, the doctrine is of any scientific importance—especially in the field of biology—is, however, a question that falls outside the scope of our enquiry. Our concern with it is limited to the question of its importance in religion. And in deciding this question we are naturally required to consider both the points just now before us. Now, as we have previously indicated, the idea of immortality, far from being able to engender the feeling of oneself as being essential to others, is incompatible with the idea of the essentiality of human beings to one another. That the two ideas are incompatible with each other is equally evident from the fact that the former is other-worldly and the latter this-worldly. The fact, however, is that the idea of immortality makes for individualism which is ruinous to religion in the sense in which we have been led to understand it, viz., as the religion of man—man regarded as a human self in distinction from an ego. And so far as Hinduism is concerned, it has perhaps no escape from the blame of rendering individualism more pronounced by infusing the belief in Transmigration and Rebirth into the belief in mere Immortality. Of course, it insists that the succession of rebirths is not interminable, but may come to an end, yielding place to liberation. But since a man who

has passed through successive rebirths is naturally left firmly established in his individuality, it is more likely than not that his title to liberation will have lapsed. Indeed, liberation is a demand of man's present life, so that not to be fulfilled in this life is the same thing for the demand as to be eliminated altogether. Even if it be granted that the realizability of liberation extends beyond the bounds of the present life of man, the liberation which he may attain in a future life should naturally bear the impress of the individuality in which he is already established, so that it would obviously not be worth the name. Buddha, let us remind ourselves, yielded to none in his insistence on the absurdity of individual liberation, and, imbued with Great Compassion (Mahākaruṇā), conceived of the ideal of life as liberation for all. And yet, in common with Hinduism, he advocated the doctrine of Transmigration and Rebirth, which only shows how difficult it is for anyone to overcome completely the influence of the beliefs prevalent in the mental atmosphere of his age. However that may be, the fact stands out that the merit of the doctrine of Transmigration and Rebirth, to which reference has been made above, is, from the strict religious point of view, not real but spurious.

Now, the aspect which religion takes on as a result of its alliance with belief in Karma and Transmigration and Rebirth is obviously not visible. But it cannot be called invisible either, because, being individualistic, it is contradictory to the feeling of human selves as being essential to one another—the feeling which really constitutes the invisible aspect of religion. In fact, it is merely *other-worldly*, whereas religion, strictly speaking, is *this-worldly* and is so not in spite of, but, in a sense, because of, its invisibility. This, however, points to the significant fact that the individualism as implied by the Hindu doctrine of Karma and Transmigration and Rebirth is fundamentally different from the same theory as propounded by philosophers like Locke, Hobbes and Rousseau. While the latter is crudely *this-worldly* and positively anti-social, the former is renunciatory and merely non-social. But then, the individualism that is conspicuous for its *other-worldliness* and its spirit of renunciation is inseparable from indifference, especially of that kind which may enable a civilization characterized by it to avoid conflicts with, and even, on occasion, to welcome, other civilizations; in fact, it would obviously leave the organization of individual and social life to chance. This, perhaps,

supplies one of the keys to the understanding of Hindu life and to the march of Hindu civilization till this day. In any case, it is an indication of the good and the evil results following from the deviation of the process of the transmutation of religion into visible forms which is manifest in the Hindu doctrine of Karma and Transmigration and Rebirth.

It remains to indicate how and with what result the same process follows its appointed direction swervelessly so as to drive, in the end, the idea of the invisibility of religion out of the field. Of course, all visible manifestations of religion, with the single exception of human conduct conforming to the principle conveyed by the bearing of the cross of disvalue, are, from one point of view, evidences, in varying degrees, of the want of religion, and, from another point of view, means of undermining, to some extent or other, the invisibility of religion. But the most devastating of them is the organization of religion into a separate institution. So far as Hinduism is concerned, its belief in Karma and Transmigration and Rebirth, and its individualism and other-worldliness consequent thereupon have prevented its development into an institutional religion strictly so called. In fact, even the idea of such a religion could not strike the Hindu mind with its belief that whatever is visible is transitory and of no permanent significance or that the visible manifestation of ultimate Reality cannot be fractional, but must be co-extensive with the entire universe, both human and non-human.¹ The most obvious reason for the non-institutional character of the Hindu religion, however, lies in the fact that, unlike other major living religions of the world, it is without a historical founder and has been in no need of active propagation.

In India, Buddhism, of course, was an exception to Hinduism in the above respect as well as in many others; and it naturally had the tendency to grow into an institutional religion, having before it, at first, the idea of the Sangha (Church) and, later, that of the Caturdisa-Sangha (Universal Church). But the idea in either form, having to hold its own in an atmosphere suffused with Hindu beliefs, became weaker and weaker and ultimately died a natural death. It is, therefore, no wonder that not only in India, but wherever in the East the influence of

¹ This belief in either form finds its expression in the Upanishads, which are the embodiment of the most developed phase of the philosophico-religious thought of the ancient Hindus.

Hinduism and Buddhism spread and came to stay, religion has been predominantly non-institutional and, in particular, characterized by an individualistic and other-worldly outlook. And this has not unnaturally been so, notwithstanding the fact that the number of people in the sphere of Hindu and Buddhist influence whom the two institutional religions, Christianity and Mohammedanism, claim as their adherents is by no means negligible. Here, then, is a fact which one may construe as the triumph of Hinduism or of Buddhism as transmuted by the influence of Hinduism or of both. But one should not at the same time lose sight of the evil attendant upon the triumph—the evil which we have previously spoken of as the result of indifferentism. However that may be, 'the unchanging East' is today a fiction rather than a fact. The change of the East was due, because the indifferentism with which it was seized is most unfavourable to the solution of, if not actually an escape from, the problems of earthly life, perhaps the only kind of life that it is given to man to live. And it is only in our day that the East is at the threshold of a revolutionary change. The stimulus to the change is, as it was bound to be, derived from that which is called Western civilization. But what is more important is that the change itself, to all appearance, bids fair to assume the shape of this civilization. This, of course, predicts a common future for mankind. But that future would be one built upon the failure of religion, perhaps unsurpassed in human history, because Western civilization, despite the fact that it has shone in the glory of Christianity through the ages and has made invaluable contributions to human happiness, seems untouched by the lesson of the life of Jesus and a travesty of the teachings of this outstanding man of religion, ignoring, in the most arbitrary manner, what is essentially human in man.

Western civilization, the culmination of the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome, is predominantly Roman in temper, being wedded to belief in the supremacy of temporal power, whether in the shape of kings and emperors or in that of institutions headed by the State, and, consequently, being conspicuous for its formalism and legalism. Scientific outlook and technology, the two outstanding contributions of ancient Greece, had naturally nothing in them that could produce an adverse effect upon the unrestricted operation of power and law, the twin bases of Roman civilization. It is, therefore, in the very nature of Western civilization to accept, for the conduct of human affairs, the

most inhuman of all principles—the principle that the individual must live for the institution and not the institution for the individual, and that man is made for law and not law for man. This principle, obviously opposed to that of love and kindness, is as unyielding in its cruelty and rapacity as the principle of the survival of the fittest which is said to govern the biological world. In view of this circumstance, the West was, and indeed still is, in need of change, but change in a manner different from that in which the change of the East was due. And the opportunity for that change came when Roman civilization came in contact with the religion of which Jesus was the founder. But, owing its origin to a historical person as it did, and being in need of active propagation as it was, this religion had the natural tendency to result—and, as a matter of fact, actually did result—in an institution called the Church. And perhaps it is mainly on this account that it was, strictly speaking, unable to conquer Roman civilization, and, on the contrary, was conquered by the latter. In consequence, the personal character and the profound ethical significance of the religion of Jesus and, in particular, its invisible aspect, the aspect in which it is the principle of love and kindness, were all lost upon Rome. And, though the Western world, the world within the political influence of Rome, gradually became Christian as a whole, what was left of this religion in that world was its visible form, indeed the most perfect visible form that religion could assume, viz., Christianity as synonymous with the Christian Church, the institution which, like the Roman State of an earlier age, was a centre of power without love and law without kindness, and which had its position well fortified with a system of dogmas substituted for the ethical principles taught and practised by Jesus, a theology substituted for the Sermon on the Mount.

The fact is that since Rome came into imperial power and Roman civilization spread far and wide in the West, the dominant interest of the Western mind has, except on occasions, been political, with the result that its other interests, lower or higher, innate or acquired, have sooner or later come to be impregnated with a political significance or rendered subservient to the art of government. This accounts for several events of fundamental importance in the history of Western civilization, two of which at least stand out as grievous disasters. One, comparatively early, is, as seen above, the transmutation of religion into a visible form with hardly any trace left of its invisibility, or, in

other words, its organization into an institution with a commanding position and a formalistic and legalistic outlook; the other, comparatively recent, is the subordination of science and technology, in themselves without any political significance, to the cause of political power. The former is, at its best, an apology for religion and, at its worst, the denial of religion in the name of its affirmation; and both bespeak the worship of Power and together make up the crude this-worldliness or, to use a more common term, materialism, which demands the sacrifice of our best to Moloch. This should easily enable us to realize that the civilization which is envisaged by Marxist philosophy with its crusade against religion, and which is in the process of making under the affectionate care of Communism, is really nothing altogether new to the West, but a transformation, appropriate to the present scientific age, of Roman civilization which, despite the fall of the Roman Empire, has lived and held its sway in the West for centuries.

Of course, Marxism and Communism are infected by the evil spirit of Roman civilization. But they do not, on that account, suffer by comparison with their rivals, the Western democracies; because the latter are by no means immune from the infection. On the contrary, to them belongs a credit of which the Western democracies seem to have no share—the credit of making Roman civilization appear in its nakedness by lifting the veil of false religion which has been obscuring its true nature for centuries. Nevertheless, for obvious reasons, the difference between Communism and the Western democracies is of no fundamental character, and it is idle to think of it as strictly ideological. But then, that would hardly lend support to the idea of ‘one world’ and that of two ‘co-existent worlds’—ideas which have in recent times been brought to the forefront of political thought, and are believed to convey alternatively the solution of the problems arising out of the political rivalries of our day. For, notwithstanding the fact that these ideas themselves are significant in their own way, the situation which calls for them is most unfavourable, if not hostile, to the realization of them, in as much as it is replete with fondness for the two outstanding legacies of Roman civilization, power without love and law without kindness, which, from one point of view, presuppose the want of cohesion in the world of human beings and, from another, are the surest means of undermining social solidarity.

TOWARDS THE RELIGION OF MAN

NOTWITHSTANDING all that has been said above, far be it from us to condemn, or even to minimize the importance of, the science and art of government, much less to suggest the abolition of power, law and institutions which would leave man with no option but to have recourse to renunciation, to be indifferent to this world, the world which, however bad it may be, is nearest and best known to him and really his own—and this maybe in the hope of his admission to another world absolutely unknown to him, but delusively conceived to be heaven, the abode of bliss. Ours is the plea for the establishment of the principle of love and kindness in the will of man and in the world of human affairs in order that power and law and institution, instead of having to exercise relentless authority and despotic rule over man, may be dedicated to the cause of humanity and, consequently, the world that is to sustain man from the cradle to the grave may become as good as possible and really human. And this suggests the remedy for the crisis of civilization which seems to have reached its climax in our day.

The outstanding fact about the latest phase of the history of human civilization is that whereas, on the one hand, the boundaries of knowledge are being extended further and further by the good offices of science, and man is acquiring more and more control over Nature; on the other, political organizations headed by the State, which are apt to determine man's present as well as his future, are gradually approximating to Nature in irrational and inhuman quality. Thus in the age through which we are passing the labour of science and man's mastery over Nature are proving futile, and Nature is, in the most subtle way, taking vengeance upon man for his disclosing her secrets and defying her might. This undoubtedly speaks of the failure of civilization. But the most tragic aspect of the failure lies in that man is today hostile to, and divided against, himself to a degree and to an extent unprecedented

in his history. Of course, Nature too is hostile to man. But that is what it cannot but be. Man's hostility to himself, on the contrary, is suicidal and, therefore, most undesirable. Nevertheless, it is as much a fact as Nature's hostility to man. But, in order that man may live in peace as he should do, he is in need of remedy for it as well as for the latter.

Time was when Nature, on account of her hostility to man, presented herself to him primarily as an object of fear, and man naturally devised ways and means of overcoming his fear of Nature, which were typified by the religion of old, the religion of God or gods. The mere overcoming of the fear of Nature on the part of man, however, is, for obvious reasons, no remedy for Nature's hostility to him, of which he was really in need in order that he could hold his own. The remedy in question is gradually coming within the reach of man as a result of the progress of science; and it consists in his mastery over Nature which science vouchsafes unto him. With a considerable measure of this gift of science at his disposal, man today is more at peace with Nature than he was ever before. But while the problem arising out of Nature's hostility to man is thus receiving solution, man, despite centuries of civilization, seems to be still in the dark as to the solution of the problem relating to his being hostile to, and divided against, himself, which is, indeed, the problem of liberation. The reason for his being left in such a plight is that he has either remained unconscious of the fact to which this problem relates, and, consequently, of the problem also; or, when he is conscious of the fact as well as the problem, the solution that suggests itself to him is, in effect, an escape from the problem itself. As a matter of fact, Western civilization, with its pre-occupation with the ideas of government by means of power and law and of the conquest of Nature, suffices to distract the attention of man from what is fundamentally wrong in himself, and from the problem of liberation consequent thereupon. On the other hand, the developed Eastern mind, conspicuous for its introspective attitude, naturally turns its attention to what is wrong in man rather than to what is so about his relation to the outside world, and, consequently, is alive to the problem of liberation. But then, with its proverbial indifferentism, it is apt to place renunciation above all values, thereby leaving this problem unresolved. It should, however, be kept in view that the lure of Western civilization has in our day told upon the Eastern mind, with the result

that the tragic situation of mankind with the problem of liberation arising out of it has fallen into universal oblivion.

But what is needed is not merely to be conscious of the problem of liberation; the need primarily is to solve it so as to bring to an end the tragedy with which mankind is seized, and to restore the life of man to its real worth consisting in the joy of living. Human civilization, however, is till this day poor in its contribution to this end, while it abounds with the ways and means of reducing Nature's hostility to man. As seen above, the religion of God, which is undoubtedly of great significance in the history of civilization, relates to the problem arising out of Nature's hostility to man and is not intended to solve, nor, as we have argued above, can really solve, the problem of liberation. But what is more significant is that once man is on the way to mastery over Nature with scientific knowledge as its basis, this religion cannot hold its own and is bound to lose its importance, no matter whether, on that account, its emotional value is adversely affected or not. And this suffices to explain why science should take the place of the religion of God, as it has in modern times done in the most befitting manner. Indeed, so far science has proved to be of the greatest use to man in his struggle for survival and, consequently, of the highest importance in the history of civilization. But that is hardly any reason why it should be able to turn the failure of the religion of God into a success by solving the problem of liberation. On the contrary, as previously indicated, it is today, as is inevitable, a passive and helpless witness to the unprecedented height of the tragedy of mankind which gives rise to this problem.

Thus, in its earlier phase which was dependent on the religion of God for its nourishment as well as in its modern phase which has science as its mainstay, civilization has been indifferent to the strictly human problem, the problem of liberation and the joy of living, and has been mainly occupied with the biological problem of survival in the struggle for existence which man has to share with the subhuman species of animals. Of course, the situation has not been so bad that religion and science as well as art, music and literature are left without their recognition as values, or that there has as yet been no one to show, by precept or by example or by both, how life can be lived best and in the strict human way. On the contrary, human civilization has shone, and still shines, in the glory of these values, and bears testimony to,

and, indeed, has every reason to be proud of, the human way of life as taught and lived by a Buddha or a Socrates or a Jesus. But still the fact remains that the history of civilization is interspersed with crises, and that the crisis with which its present phase is seized perhaps outweighs all its precedents. What is more significant is, however, that the crisis generally is, on a larger or a smaller scale, of the nature of a menace to the future of mankind, and, in particular, tends to undermine the deeper meaning of human existence. Hence it is evident that our civilization is as yet a stranger to the process of assimilation of the values that be, and includes little provision for the prevalence of the human way of life as a rule rather than as an exception.

The significant fact, then, is that the adventure of man, to which civilization owes its origin and its development, is in a state of arrest on the biological plane and away from its destination where his conquest of Nature and his survival in the struggle for existence are to be crowned with his regeneration in the manner of his investiture with the joy of living. This points to the need—in fact, the paramount need—of mankind which obviously is not mere increase of knowledge, nor mere improvement of the organization of individual and social life in the supposed perfect manner as based on science and technology, nor a new creed, but a way of life that becomes man as a human being. The way of life in question, of course, rules out the idea of man as a mere actor in the drama of Natural Evolution—the idea that vitiates the scientific humanism of the present age. Its real basis lies in the recognition of man as an end in himself with an inexchangeable and unshakable place in a realm, devoid of such strifes and competitions as are apt to divide him from his fellow-men, where he is united with others of his kind by the strongest of all ties—the tie of love and kindness. This should not, however, be construed as conveying an advice against the pursuit of the religion of God. On the contrary, as we have indicated in the beginning of this essay, there should be nothing to deprive us of the liberty to build for ourselves private roads to the Deity. Ours is primarily a plea against the institutionalization to which the religion of God is naturally prone; and this owing to the fact that the institutionalization of religion generally results in the sacrifice of the sentiments of love and kindness at the altar of Power and Law, thereby undermining all that is human in man. It is on this account, if not on any other, that the religion of God should, as we may make bold to

suggest, be translated into the religion that declares: 'Man is the greatest truth and the highest value, and above him there is none.'¹ Religion thus conceived is the religion of man showing a road that promises to lead us to the joy of living, but not without our having to bear the cross of disvalue. It is this road that it is incumbent upon us to follow. 'Clearly it must be very hard when it is so seldom found. For how could it be that it is neglected practically by all, if salvation were close at hand and could be found without difficulty? But all excellent things are as difficult as they are rare.'²

¹ This is an adaptation from a saying of fundamental importance in a school of Vaisnavism, which is one of the outstanding theistic religions in India.

² Spinoza, *Ethics*; Part V, XLII, note.

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